IRELAND,

AND ITS ECONOMY.

IRELAND,

AND ITS ECONOMY;

BEING THE

RESULT OF OBSERVATIONS

MADE

IN A TOUR THROUGH THE COUNTRY IN THE AUTUMN OF 1829.

By J. E. BICHENO, Esq., F.R.S.,
Sec. Linn. Soc., &c.

"Was it for me the dark abyss to tread,
And read the book which many cannot read?"
DRYDEN.

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TO

FREDERICK PAGE, Esq.,

OF SPEEN;

ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S DEPUTY-LIEUTENANTS FOR THE COUNTY OF BERKS,

A BENCHER OF THE HONOURABLE SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE,

AND THE INTELLIGENT AND AGREEABLE COMPANION OF HIS JOURNEY THROUGH IRELAND,

THIS WORK

IS INSCRIBED, AS A FRIENDLY REMEMBRANCE,

BY THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

At the present moment no person will be considered obtrusive who can throw any fresh light on the obscure and abstruse questions relating to the condition of Ireland; and I venture to lay the present little volume with some confidence before the public, because it has not been elaborated in the closet, but is the result of actual observation, having seen, with my own eyes, what is strange to say, a greater portion of the country, and more of the inhabitants, than almost any of the native gentry whom accident has thrown in my way: and although the facts I have collected are

necessarily those which lie upon the surface, and are open to all the world, yet, as I have generally stated the ground on which I have formed my opinions, the reader will have the opportunity of appreciating their value, and forming his own conclusions.

Besides, national character and national institutions do lie on the surface; and a stranger is more likely than the resident to catch their peculiar features, just as a visitor discovers a common resemblance in a family long before it is recognized by themselves.

I had long harboured the desire of visiting a country, which contradicts the received theory of population, and the established doctrines of political economists; where, contrary to experience, the higher and lower orders profess different religions; and whence spring, as Pliny says of Africa in

his time, all the marvellous and unaccountable contradictions of nature. Ireland is, therefore, to the moral and political philosopher what Australia is to the naturalist,—a land of strange anomalies; and he must be a very dull observer, who does not bring home, from either of these countries, something new and interesting.

No convenient opportunity occurred, until last year, to fulfil my wishes; when, challenged by a friend, whose conversation would enliven a less hospitable journey, I could no longer delay the execution of my project, and cheerfully acceded to his proposal. Our route lay through the counties of Waterford, Cork, Kerry, the western part of Clare, Limerick, Tipperary, Kilkenny, Carlow, Kildare, Dublin; then northward direct to Belfast, returning through Armagh, whence I diverged through Monaghan to

Enniskillen and Sligo, and joined him again in the "fair city" of Dublin.

The remarks upon which I have dwelt, are such as spring out of that state of society which is the peculiarity of Ireland; and which is to be found chiefly in Munster, and in the west of the kingdom. The old English Pale, being within the influence of a great and thriving metropolis, though far behind, yet bears a nearer resemblance to England; while the north-east, as is well known, is like Scotland.

In the chapter on Landlord and Tenant, I have drawn a comparison, somewhat at length, between the Highland system, where the proprietor was content to receive his rent, not so much in money, as in honour, military service, and family attachment; and the Irish system, which treats land solely as a source of profit, without regard

to the influence and dignity which naturally belong to the owners of the soil. In the one case, the landlords acquired an unbounded authority over their tenantry, which led to a voluntary and slavish subjection; in the other case we witness a total loss of all control, and a rooted antipathy between the parties. The English proprietors, by adopting the middle course of accepting moderate rents, retained a strong hold on the affections of their tenants; and though this system has in modern times been considerably broken in upon by the mercantile spirit which has been imbibed, still, there is a large number of proprietors who have not been bewildered by these dreams of profit, but who feel that their consequence and weight in society is derived from the liberal treatment of their tenantry. If anything be wanting to confirm them in this

opinion, they will do well to study the condition of Ireland.

I have not been inattentive to the question of poor-laws, at the present moment so interesting both to England and Ireland. My companion arrives at a different conclusion from myself; and it is but fair to add, that neither of us had to travel to Ireland for a theory on the subject. As he has already laid the result of his inquiries before the public*, the reader has the opportunity of comparing our reasoning, and forming his own opinion upon this important branch of legislation.

As it is repugnant to my nature willingly to inflict pain, I hope nothing will be found in this volume which may justly give

* Observations on the State of the Indigent Poor in Ireland, and the existing Institutions for their Relief; being a sequel to "The Principle of the English Poor-laws illustrated and defended."

offence. My portraits are not individual, but generic; and the Irish, as far as I have witnessed, endure, with great good humour, even the ugly truth of a faithful likeness. I should augur, indeed, more favourably of the country, if the predominant classes were more jealous of its honour and reputation; but it is one of their glaring defects, that they want nationality. Where, in their places of public resort, excepting Trinity College, are the statues of their great men? Of Burke, the profoundest of political philosophers; of Swift, incomparable in wit and originality; of Usher, of Boyle, of Berkeley, of Goldsmith; or of those of their own generation, of Charlemont, of Grattan, of Curran? I saw Byron and Scott in their counting-houses, where in England would have hung some modern Whittington, Lord Mayor of London, and political partisans in their dwelling-houses; but I saw no portraits of

the worthies of their own land, which display the strong ties that bind us to our home and country.

I have not thought myself bound down to the same gravity in matters of narration and of a general character, as in those discussions which are of serious import; and if the reader belong to that class which is offended by the liberties I have taken, I must beg him to pass such parts over as unimportant to my purpose, lest like myself he should suffer by the contagion of example.

If I have adopted an excusatory tone in favour of the Catholics, it must be regarded as generosity towards a calumniated party, and not as manifesting my attachment to them.

London, 10*th May*, 1830.

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IRELAND,

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS—THE FACE OF THE COUNTRY—PEASANTRY—TRAVELLING.

FEW countries present more curious or more anxious matter for observation than Ireland. To the politician, the political economist, the philanthropist, and the philosopher, she is alike interesting. A state of society is exhibited among the lower class, which does not conform in the slightest degree with that which is found among the higher, and which has been upheld among themselves in spite of legal enactments, and other efforts to force upon them a different system. From the time of the Cromwellian settlement down to the present day, little or no amalgamation has taken place between the two ranks; but they remain strangers in affinity, divided in

religion, and each setting up its own peculiar laws as the ultimate appeal for justice. Nor is it the least remarkable feature of the case, that this anomaly has existed among a peasantry abounding in gratitude, generosity, good humour, and social affection.

The greater part of the world, to spare themselves the labour of reflection, cut the question short by attributing this state of things to the depravity originally inherent to the Irish character. They regard it as lawless, blood-thirsty, irascible, and superstitious by nature; so that any attempt to resolve the difficulties is waste labour. Although it cannot be denied, that the descendants of particular stocks of the human race may have some original conformation, which may stamp upon their character peculiarities uninherited by others, and that climate may favour particular virtues and vices, yet these effects are too remote and too slight amongst Europeans to make them a safe ground to reason upon. Free institutions and despotisms have been established among the same people, both in the

north and south of Europe. Arts, sciences, and commerce, have flourished at particular periods of the history of many nations; the grave and the gay are found in every latitude; and there is nothing in the habits and nature of the Irish, that has not existed before among the Highlanders, who are descended from the same common stock. Such reasoners have at least a strong authority on their side in Milton, who seems to have thought that a *cold climate* might "damp his intended wing."

National character is still less accidental than that of individuals. The former is an average struck from an incalculable number of cases, operated upon by similar general causes. These are, chiefly, physical situation, political institutions, and religious instruction; and I think it will be found that Ireland presents sufficient singularities in these respects to account satisfactorily for her insubordinate, alienated, and distressed condition.

It is, no doubt, flattering to the vanity of nations, to attribute their eminence to the

original endowments bestowed by nature. The ancients traced their genealogy to the Gods, and we have only adopted another mode of establishing our descent. England places her supremacy upon the ground of her excellent moral and intellectual character. Yet, how has this been formed? No doubt, chiefly by our physical circumstances. The fine soils we possess, under an insular climate, tempted the cupidity of less favored nations, and for ages England was the prize awarded to the most valorous colonists. They found that crops, which could not be grown on the same parallel on the Continent, flourished here; and that they had a shorter and milder winter, and nearly a perpetual verdure to support their cattle. The Celtic population, who were their inferiors in civilization, necessarily retired before them, or were banished to the worst lands; and the blood which flows through the veins of Englishmen, though derived from several stocks, is indebted for its superiority to the bold and enterprizing settlers who took advantage of physical circumstances. As civi-

lization proceeded, the further resources of the country were disclosed. The generous soil still repaid the diligence of the cultivators. Fuel was found conveniently dispersed, and the want of it has not been, as in many countries, an insurmountable barrier to improvement.

The proximity of coal and iron has given her facilities which no other country possesses to an equal extent. Her vast mineral treasures have created a demand for, and furnished a supply of, machinery to an incredible amount. The surplus hands of agriculture have been drained off to manufactures, and the sub-division of the soil has been checked by the abundant demand for other than agricultural labour. Success has stimulated ingenuity, and reward has sweetened industry. Without knowing the actual discouragements our forefathers had to contend with, it is unfair to draw a comparison between this kingdom and Ireland. There can be little doubt that we are an industrious people, skilful in the arts and sciences; we carry mechanics and profitable

employments to the utmost pitch of perfection; certain virtues flourish among us, because we have not shut our eyes to our interest, but have taken advantage of the favourable circumstances by which we have been surrounded.

The soil and situation of Holland, just at the outlet of two great navigable rivers made her commercial in spite of the want of harbours, and the dangers of approaching the coast. Flanders is a great garden, in consequence of her extended plains of diluvium; and she has furnished the arena for fighting the battles of the world, because of these plains, and of the facility of supporting armies upon them. Poland is the corn granary of Europe, being placed on a naturally fertile soil of great extent. Wales is a territory of mountains, and the inhabitants, preferring exile to slavery, have never yet amalgamated with the English, either in language, habits, tenures, or occupations. The religion of the people has never been thoroughly that of the establishment, any more than in Cornwall.

All northern people, who live by agriculture alone, are indolent, because they have no profitable occupation half the year. The cultivation of the earth, pursued in the simple manner of our ancestors, has its seasons of labour and repose; and it is as unjust to accuse a Highlander, or an Irish peasant, of incorrigible indolence, as it would be to reflect upon them for talking a dialect, or not moving with the graces of a courtier. If England has had the five talents confided to her stewardship, let her not taunt Ireland, to whom one or none has been entrusted, that *she* has not made usurious interest.

The physical advantages of Ireland are far inferior to those of England. The proportion of good soil is much less; indeed, Connaught and Munster are actually poor countries. A great part of Ulster is covered with mountainous land, and with water; and when the bogs and mountains are subtracted from Leinster, the remainder contains comparatively a small portion of soil equal to the best tracts of the sister country.

In drawing a comparison between England and Ireland, almost every author has placed the productiveness of the latter country very high; but I must confess myself to have been disappointed to find such extensive tracts of land unfit for corn cultivation.

The agriculture of a large portion of the country is upon much the same system as we know to have prevailed in England in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; that is by *cotters*, whose capital consisted in their labour, and who paid part, or the whole of their rent, by working a certain portion of time for the landlord. Under this system, the quantity even of poor land under the plough and the spade considerably exceeds that which is found profitable where more capital can be commanded to buy sheep and cattle. It is the best mode of turning simple labour to account, and enables a large population to exist, though upon slender means. That the *cottier* system of husbandry was formerly prevalent here, we have, besides history, the undeniable testimony of the state in which the high lands, now in

pasture, have been left at some remote period. At elevations and in soils, which the modern farmer, improved as his means are, does not think worth tilling, our ancestors drove the plough, the marks of which remain to a great extent at this day. It would appear from the lands that transmit the evidence to us, that they gave a preference to the stiff soils, which now repay the husbandman with the least profit. The *cottier* system disappeared in England after the wars of York and Lancaster, when capital became invested to a considerable extent in land, and proprietors, assured of protection, left the towns, and took up their residence in the country.

In England, the intractable clays was the residue left to the poor cotters: in Ireland there are no clay lands corresponding with ours, and the cotters are driven to cultivate the inhospitable bogs and mountain lands. Wherever there exists a tract of good land, a better system of farming is found, and the condition of the tenantry is improved. As we know the population has pressed hard

upon the means of subsistence for a very long period, we may infer pretty safely, that very little land, possessing natural fertility, is left unreclaimed; and it is probable that, under a system of management where a money capital shall be invested, much of that which is now under the plough and the spade, would be abandoned to the spontaneous herbage.

It is not a little curious to compare the soils which are productive in Ireland, with those which bear the highest character for fertility in England; from which comparison it will be discovered that the moisture of the climate makes a compensation for the absence of many conditions, which are requisite in drier countries.

The favourite spots upon which the ancient towns of England have grown up are upon the red marl; and out of twenty-two cathedral cities, nearly two-thirds are thus situated. In Ireland the greater part of the chief towns are placed either upon, or immediately adjacent to, the mountain limestone. Waterford, Lismore, Fermoy, Car-

rick-on-Suir, Clonmell, Cahir, Limerick, Cork, Sligo, Enniskillen, Dublin, Kilkenny, Carlow, Tralee, and others, are thus circumstanced. This limestone, so important to Ireland, exists in great plains in the central counties, and appears here and there in narrow strips throughout a great part of Munster; so that but little land in this province, excepting the mountains in the south-west angle, lies at an inconvenient distance from it. This circumstance in England would make the adjacent poor soils extremely valuable; but in the sister country, the want of farming capital leaves the cultivator almost entirely to the inherent fertility, and prevents him from taking advantage of the speculative good.

The limestone in England rises into lofty hills, which are poor and hungry in their agricultural character, though their *debris* in the valleys occasionally furnishes good pasture. They are generally deficient in water, and do not contain bogs. In Ireland, the rock holds water, where quarries have been worked, and the largest bogs are found upon

it. The Bog of Allan, which comprehends rather a district of bog than a single one, is thus situated.

The perpetual verdure of Ireland has given to it the name of "Green Erin," a name which indicates the moisture of its climate, the pastoral state of the land, and its unsuitableness for ripening corn. The ripening at last is but imperfect, as kilns are seen in the neighbourhood of every mill, for completing by art what nature has begun. The limestone, however, when it is not covered with bog, furnishes a dry and healthy soil, and compensates for the humidity of the climate. It could not escape the observation of a botanist, that, with all the moisture, the walls of the houses of the towns, which are generally built of this material, and the roofs are not covered, as about London, with the same quantity of *lichens*, and *confervæ* or *byssi*. I would notice Cork, Waterford, Lismore, Limerick, and Dublin, as instances of the fact. The buildings, indeed, present a fresh appearance, and a most agreeable contrast to the towns of

England, where they are defiled with coal-smoke in addition. This fresh appearance is to be attributed to the absence of the vegetable productions before mentioned, and to the general use of turf as a firing. As another proof of the atmospheric dryness produced by this soil, the straw of the ripening corn this year was much less damaged by *mucor* than in England.

But the most curious parts of Ireland are Munster and Connaught, and the poor mountainous districts inhabited by the Celtic population. The north-east is like Scotland. Munster, south of the Suir, is generally slaty, with hills of grauwacke and conglomerate sandstone. Such are the Galtee, the Knockmeledown, the Monnavoullagh, and the Commeragh Mountains, and also the mountain district of Kerry. The plains over which the eye occasionally ranges, and the lofty hills, with their abrupt outline, which shut in the distance, are remarkable features in the landscape *. It is a dreary inhospita-

* As a proof of the distance which may sometimes be commanded from small elevations, it may be mentioned,

ble tract of country, appropriated to the rearing of cattle, the making of butter, and the growing of oats and potatoes. The vallies, however, of the Suir, the Blackwater, and the Lee, which are the principal drainage, furnish remarkably good land, and afford beautiful scenery. These rivers, with others in Ireland, have made their way for a long distance at the edge where the limestone joins the slate or conglomerate, probably owing to some softer strata which have interposed. The banks of the Shannon, and the Golden Vale in the county of Tipperary, are justly celebrated for their fertility.

Generally through Munster the bogs are small, and interspersed conveniently among the dry soil. Portions of gravel are frequent here and there, affording excellent crops of potatoes, and are capable of bearing good oats. The interspersion of bog and dry gravel has very much facilitated

that Mr. Drummond, when on the Cultagh mountain on Lough Earne, saw a light upon the Keeper, near Limerick, being a distance of one hundred and two miles, although he could not at any time see the mountain itself. The line here was along the valley of the Shannon.

cultivation in this moist and inhospitable country; and wherever they are found contiguous, the population evidently accumulates densely.

To an eye accustomed to the rich landscapes of England, the absence of trees and live hedges is a distressing deficiency. About the mansions of affluent and prudent families alone have they been preserved. The huge rectangular houses of the gentry, being imitations of the square towers of their forefathers, and intended for defence as well as shelter, stand frequently upon the plains without a single tree around them, and give the impression of wildness and discomfort. Instead of hedges for fences, mounds of earth and stone, which are called ditches, are every where to be seen, but generally broken down in a multitude of places by the trespassing of cattle.

In this country of expedients, the remedy for bad fences is to tie the legs of each quadruped together with wisps of straw; and in the case of the goat, who is pre-eminently a trespasser, in addition, to yoke two of

them together. Even fowls and turkeys are bound hand and foot, so that they make but a lame use of either legs or wings. The giant in the nursery tale, having also a propensity to devour, tied his own legs, that he might not get on too fast.

It is a curious circumstance in Irish geology, that the country is without the superior formations, and, consequently, the clays which usually accompany them. This alone is sufficient to account for a very marked difference in the produce of England and Ireland. The clays of England furnish the grazing countries and the woodlands; and, in spite of the want of fuel among the rural population, they continue to produce underwood and timber. In Ireland the natural forests, which had not entirely disappeared at the end of the seventeenth century, have now yielded every where to the pressing necessities of the people; and there is no extent of soil so naturally productive of wood, that the landlords find it their interest to grow this article in preference to any other.

Lean cattle and butter are the staple commodities produced for sale by the little farmers of Munster. The highly productive lands of the Shannon, and the pastures of Limerick and Tipperary, are employed in grazing. Cork and Waterford are the great outlets to which the produce finds its way, and even those who reside in the western side of the country prefer these markets to any on the eastern coast, in consequence of a more certain sale. Such as reside within a reasonable distance deliver the butter in their own carts, while those who live remote employ a carrier, who is also the salesman. This traffic creates a great deal of land carriage, and is almost the only one observable on the roads. When the butter is brought into the market, the quality of it is determined by provers or tasters, who are appointed by a committee of merchants. The firkin is then branded with the number 1, 2, 3, or 4, according to its goodness. Factors are the purchasers, who buy for ready money, and they sell to the exporter for ready money also. The

factor frequently makes an advance to the farmer in the month of May, to enable him to pay his rent, and takes his butter, when it is brought to market, at ten or twelve shillings per firkin cheaper than the market price, according to agreement. The factor in this case also supplies the farmer with a certain number of casks. As the export from Cork is chiefly to Lisbon and the West Indies, more salt is employed than in other Irish butters. The white oak of Canada is preferred for making the casks, as it is supposed to hold the brine better than other woods.

It is certainly a little surprising, that a process so delicate as that of making butter should be carried on to so great an extent, and so successfully, in the rude buildings of the peasantry. There must be cleanliness somewhere, or the manufacture would be impracticable. Warmth, indeed, is favourable to the production of cream; and the plan seems to be, as in Devonshire, to suffer the milk to stand until all the cream is risen, and then to skim it off at once. The

butter which is produced has a taste like soft cheese. The sour milk is consumed at home, or, if a town be in the neighbourhood, taken there to sell. As it is in universal demand, there is no difficulty in finding purchasers. At Waterford it was selling for three farthings per quart, good measure. Cheese is not an article of Irish produce; it is brought to the tables of the affluent as an indulgence.

Oats being a more bulky article, and less liable to injury, a market is sought nearer home, and the western ports of Ireland are great outlets for this grain. It is within the memory of many individuals living, when no such persons as corn-merchants existed on the western coast. Even a Catholic bishop mentioned, that when he first visited Tralee, now containing 14,000 inhabitants, he was obliged, in order to feed his horse, to go into the town and look for some farmer who might be bringing a bushel or two of oats for sale. Within the present century, merchants have arisen; and few towns are now without a certain market at the time's price.

Indeed, on the western coasts more than one town has been matured, with its church, gaol, whipping-post, and market, by the enterprize of a single individual.

The wheat, which is produced, is manufactured into flour, for the consumption of Lancashire and Glamorgan. We saw at Clonmell a mill which drives fifteen pairs of stones, and at Cahir another scarcely inferior. Probably, no single concern, not even in the linen trade, employs larger capitals than flour-mills. They were greatly encouraged by the Irish parliament, and a bounty was given for all flour consumed in Dublin, of Irish growth, according to the distance of the mill where it was manufactured.

But the peculiar crop of Ireland, and one, too, that has contributed to place her in the singular position she occupies among nations, is the potatoe. Her climate and her soil are particularly favourable to its production. Showers do not injure it: frost is its only enemy, and the cultivators have little to fear from this evil. The crops therefore are large; the utmost pains are

taken to cultivate them; and the industry and care the people display in the business, contradicts entirely the charge of inherent and unconquerable indolence. The poor Irish are only like the rest of the world; they do not work when they get no return.

I have never seen any field cultivation in England, except, perhaps, hops, where more diligence is discovered. Every ounce of manure is carefully husbanded, and every weed is destroyed. The drainage is made complete; and the hoe, or rather the apology for that instrument, is constantly going.

The potatoe is the only produce the cotter reserves for himself. All the rest, cattle, corn, butter, pigs, poultry, eggs, go to the landlord. As long as the potatoe lasts, he and his family have abundance. They thrive under it, and with plenty of ventilation, enjoy good health, and have the clearest skins in the world. But if the crop fail, or the season should prove very unfavourable for preserving it, the months of April and May are trying seasons. Then it is they are driven to subsist upon weeds, fe-

vers spread, and the utmost distress prevails. This is the great objection to such subsistence; and no discovery could be made more acceptable, or more useful to them, than some mode of preserving the potatoe for a longer period. The yellow meal, which is ground maize, has lately been introduced from America; and I trust will, in the hands of the humane, be made to mitigate some of their misery. It was selling at Carrick on Suir, when we were there, at one shilling per stone of fourteen pounds. It seemed to be regarded by the poor people as an excellent substitute for oatmeal, and was in high repute among them.

The pig is the most frequent domestic animal, and is admirably adapted to the habits of the people. He is fed upon the refuse food of the cabin, and his comfort is not inferior to that of the family. It is curious to witness the effect which religious scruples have had upon this animal. The pig became an object of attention, in common with other agricultural stock, soon after the Reformation. The Calvinistic Church

repudiated the flesh, as interdicted food; and the Scotch would no more have made the animal the inmate of the house, and the companion of their children, than they would have taken to their bosoms the old serpent. These religious scruples have now given way; and the pig, though not a favourite, has established himself in Scotland.

A singular feature in the face of Ireland, is the bogs. They are found on strata, which do not produce them in Great Britain, owing to the flatness of the rock. Neither are the bogs confined to the hollows, or the tops of the hills, but they have frequently their undulations like the dry soil. In many places they are naturally drained of the water which occasioned them, and the peat is left close and compact. I think it may pretty safely be asserted that the formation is going on at present, for two existing species of *Sphagna*, the *obtusifolium*, and the *acutifolium*, with *Hypnum cuspidatum*, and the roots of an *Eriophorum*, may be distinguished undecomposed in the upper part of the red bog. At a still greater depth

the twigs of a birch, a pine, an oak, and in abundance a tree which looks exceedingly like yew; but no botanist has yet identified the species. At present no pine is found wild in the island, nor do the oldest botanical works mention it as indigenous. The yew (*Taxus baccata*) is indigenous at present; but bog yew is found in the bogs on slate, as well as limestone; whereas its natural situation in England is a calcareous soil, so that it has probably been drifted to the spots where it is now found on slate. It has been observed, that occasionally the trees appear to lie in one direction, as if they had been thrown down all at once by some great convulsion. Bogwood is so abundant that it is every where used for lighting the turf, and among the cotters it is employed for making their roofs, doors, posts, and indeed for all their scanty carpentry. In letting land to a tenant, he either claims *bog-leave*, as it is called, or has a piece set out to him for his particular use. The depriving him of this accommodation is often arbitrarily done by the landlord, in order to get rid of him altogether.

The commissioners who reported to parliament on the bogs of Ireland, state that the extent of them cannot be less than 2,330,000 English acres, of which 1,576,000 consist of flat red bog. Six-sevenths of the bogs, exclusive of mere mountain bogs, and bogs of less extent than 500 acres, are included in that portion of the island which lies between the line drawn from Wicklow Head to Galway, and another drawn from Howth Head to Sligo. This portion in its form resembles a broad belt, drawn across the centre of Ireland, with its narrowest end nearest the capital, and gradually extending in breadth as it approaches the western ocean. This great division of the island, extending from east to west, is traversed by the Shannon from north to south, and is thus divided into two parts. That portion of the bogs which lies to the westward of this river, contains more than double the extent that is to be found to the eastward. The commissioners are of opinion, that if the bogs of Ireland (exclusive of mere mountain bogs, and bogs under 500 acres) be supposed to

be divided into twenty parts, about seventeen of them will lie in the great division just described, *viz.*, twelve to the westward, and five to the eastward of the Shannon; and of the remaining three parts, two will lie to the south, and one to the north of this division. Most of the bogs which lie to the eastward of the river, occupying a considerable portion of the King's County, and the county of Kildare, are generally known by the name of the Bog of Allan; but this is not one great morass. On the contrary, the bogs to which this appellation is applied are perfectly distinct from one another, often intersected by ridges of dry country, and inclining towards different rivers. In general there is no spot of these bogs, to the eastward of the Shannon, so much as two Irish miles distant from the upland and cultivated districts.

Thus far the commissioners. The bogs in Munster, with the exception of the alpine district of Kerry, are nowhere very extensive, but they are very numerous. Here a bit of bog, there a bit of dry soil; so

that the poor are accommodated with the two grand essentials of their existence in close proximity. The worst place for fuel, which we passed through, was the good land in the county of Tipperary, where the deficiency of turf was made up by straw and stubble, with a small quantity of furze. The large towns on the coast, both on the east and the west side of the island, are supplied with coals from Whitehaven, and Wigan. Cork, and the ports to the south, obtain a considerable quantity from Glamorgan. The price at the ports, around Ireland, is from eighteen to twenty shillings per ton. The poor are therefore debarred from the use of them. The gentry and tradespeople burn them chiefly in their parlours; the turf being generally used in the kitchen, sometimes from economy, and at other times because the servants are ignorant of the management of coal.

The writers on population have never given much consideration to the effects, which the article of fuel has upon the question. In many situations it is as essential

as food, and in rich soils, where the deficiency generally exists, the want of it frequently counterbalances the advantages; while in poor countries the abundance of it compensates for destitution in other things. The rainy climate of Ireland, and the wet occupations of the people, with the nature of their food, makes a fire more important to them than to most others; and in fact, is frequently the substitute for clothing, bedding, and, in part, shelter. If it had not been for the bog, the measures taken in former times to extirpate the nation, might probably have succeeded; but the bog gave them a degree of comfort upon easy terms, and enabled them to live under severe privations of another kind. If they were driven to desperation this year, and were banished to the inhospitable wastes and mountains, in the hope that their lives would be wasted by the extremity of their sufferings, still in a few years they were as numerous as ever; and the spring of population could never be kept down by any weight of oppression their enemies dared to impose.

The waters of Ireland are approaching in their scale of grandeur, those of their neighbours on the other side the Atlantic. The beauties of some of the lakes are too well known to need description, though many of them are rather inland seas, and have no picturesque beauty to boast of. Steam vessels are established on the Shannon by the enterprize of an Englishman; and Limerick and Dublin may now conveniently interchange their respective commodities.

The habitations of the peasantry are, as every body knows, of the rudest and most miserable construction. They are scattered over the country wherever a bit of soil is to be obtained, fit for the potatoe; but the favourite spot is beside a road, where they are frequently seen to extend with short intervals for miles together. These collections of hovels form almost the only villages to be seen by the traveller. In Munster, to which we chiefly directed our attention, is probably to be witnessed as low a scale of shelter as is to be found in Europe among a settled population. It is built by the occu-

pier of the soil out of the materials he finds on the spot. The four walls are of dirt, mixed with rushes or straw beaten up with it. The floor is the earth. The roof is constructed of bogwood, fastened together with pins of the same, or tied with rude cordage made of grass or rye-straw, which is a favourite material. The covering is sods, or perhaps a thatch of heath. If a window be indulged in, it consists of a single pane of glass, built in with the wall; and when it gets broken, which inevitably happens sooner or later, it is mended by plastering the hole up with dirt*. There is a door-way, but frequently no door; its place being supplied by a straw-mat platted for the purpose, which easily admits of a passage behind the scenes; but if you are shut out, the old jest is very nearly a truth, you may put your arm down the chimney and unlock the door. The interior is furnished with a dresser, some crockery, a table, a stool or two, a bedstead, and that servant of all work the *crock*.

* An Orange lady, of no small consideration, assigned to me the reason of these small windows to be, that the peasantry were afraid of being shot!

There never was a utensil applied to more purposes than this. It is like Hudibras' sword—

> 'Twould make clean shoes, and in the earth
> Set leeks and onions, and so forth.

The crock not only boils the potatoes, which is its legitimate application, but aids in fetching them home, washing them, and all things else that are washable. With the assistance of a table and a kish, it barricades the door, to prevent the irruptions of the pig and the cow during meals. It serves the pig and the children, collects the jetsum and flotsum of the cabin, and is alternately a vessel of honour and dishonour.

The chimney, if there be one, is a square frame of wood-work, wrapped round with wattles of hay, and plastered with clay; or in the counties of Cork and Kerry it is a butter firkin, or a bee-hive, or a basket. The smoke indeed seldom escapes by its lawful channel, but makes its way as it can by every pore through the roof, walls, and door; so that an Englishman, on the first impulse, immediately thinks of sending for the eti-

gines. A moment's reflection teaches him, that in Ireland smoke is not always the prelude to fire. It is frequently the utmost which the fuel itself can elaborate. The general aspect of these hovels at a distance, is that of heaps of dung reeking with the steam of their own fermentation.

Immediately convenient to the door, and on each side, are the receptacles, into which the *rejectamenta* of the cabin are thrown; but they mostly find their way to these places by the laws of gravitation alone. Many attempts have been made by humane individuals, to induce them to remove these offensive collections out of sight, but in vain. Like other farmers, they love to display their wealth; and if they understand nothing else, they have learned how to convert decomposed animal and vegetable matter into potatoes.

The cow, the pig, the goat, the turkies are as much a part of the family as the children. They grow up together, eat of the same meat, drink of the same cup, and lie in the same bosom. The ordinary answer when you remonstrate with them about these

intrusions, is now as of old; "And sure havn't they a right, for don't they pay the rent?" The first exit of the family in the morning is like the debarkation of the diluvian patriarch: "And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him; every beast, and every fowl, and every creeping thing."

The tenant of twenty or thirty acres, which is a very common holding, is but little better accommodated. He has probably an additional compartment, hardly divided, for a sleeping place, or a dairy; and although it might have been thought that a large family of all ages, and even strangers, lying together in this way would be productive of serious immorality, I must justify the peasantry from the imputations of Arthur Young and some other travellers, and especially from the slanders of the *orange* faction of the country, and declare, that we heard the most unimpeachable testimony in favour of them, and that they are signally chaste in their conduct.

Yet, after all, these cabins cannot be so

unwholesome as theory would lead us to conclude; or how could the inhabitants of them enjoy such plenitude of health, and how could the delicate operation of butter-making be carried on? If the house and its curtilage be dirty, the surface of their persons is more frequently cleansed than in some other places where it is wrapped in fine clothing. At the entrance of a town, the traveller constantly witnesses lustrations which are not performed where shoes and stockings are worn. The cause of fever among them is deteriorated and unwholesome food, arising from a deficiency in their crop of potatoes, or injury sustained from frost, or too mild a winter, which has induced an early vegetation.

Where the habitation itself is so wretched, the ornament of a garden is not to be expected. No rose or woodbine climbs round the door, with some warbling bird suspended near; nor is there the least plot appropriated to flowers. The houses of the more wealthy are remarkably deficient in this respect, although they have a milder climate than

England, and might easily preserve the choicest plants. The lady, even, does not indulge in a few pots of rarities at her window. The disinclination of farmers to become gardeners admits of explanation; they are gardeners on a larger scale; but that persons of education, otherwise occupied, should not be cultivators, is less easy of solution.

The clothing of the peasantry is not superior to their habitations. It is as negative, too, as the political virtue of their betters. In the wealthy classes of society, indulgence in dress is usually among the females; in the lowest, it is among the other sex. Passing from a distressed population into an improved district, shoes and stockings are first observed upon men. In England, clothes are the first article which the poor man accumulates. Almost all his first savings, and those of his wife and children, are thus invested. In the winter, they serve as a bank to draw upon, and many of them will be found at the pawnbrokers' before the expiration of this trying season. In Ireland,

the peasantry have no superfluity of dress to pawn, for the difficulty there is how to get covered. In Munster, the cotter has his frieze jacket spun at home; his femoral integuments, or a fragment of the same, never buttoned at the knees, and never fitting, bought at the slop shop; and his great coat made of frieze also. In this he works, and, philosopher like, wears it to keep out the heat as well as the cold. His shirt is generally good, as it is spun at home,—*cætera desunt.* The cut of his clothes indicates them to be an imitation of modern dress. King James obliged the peasantry, as far as he could by law, to abandon the dress of their ancestors.

Several districts are marked by the colour of the frieze. In the counties of Cork and Waterford, it is dark-blue and shades of damson; in Kerry, it is grey. The Galway men are fond of a Windsor blue, while their wives rejoice in a bit of scarlet. Some of their dyes they obtain from wild plants: alder, the roots of buckbean, and elder. Such peculiarities are worth noticing, as they fre-

quently point out the natural divisions of a country in more important matters than dress. Great quantities of cast-off clothes are imported from England, which find their way into the remotest districts.

In the counties of Waterford, Cork, and Kerry, the traveller witnesses too many instances of the wretchedness of the women, not to be deeply affected by it. If destitution is to be endured, they are the first sufferers. They wrap themselves up in large blue cloaks, with great hoods, summer and winter; and as they do not court the gaze of passengers, the whole country looks as if it was widowed and forlorn. We thought the common people small in stature, and coarse in their features; but as the children are remarkably pretty, the defects of the parents are probably to be attributed to smoke and hard living, and to their exposure to the inclemency of the weather.

If we had credited the representations made to us by *orange* friends very soon after our landing, we should have been dissuaded from attempting to penetrate into some of

the remote corners of the west; but as their apprehensions on our behalf arose out of prejudices, working, too, upon them at a moment when they considered their loyalty had been sacrificed to mistaken liberality, we travelled on in spite of their forebodings, and had never the slightest reason to regret our determination, our only care being not to be mistaken for Irish gentlemen. Not a finger was ever lifted against us, but the most cheerful assistance was afforded to us in every difficulty; and although we travelled in the most disturbed districts, and among people who were sheltering murderers, and some of them murderers themselves, I am satisfied they might have been trusted with untold gold; and it is certain, that they are ready to share their scanty meal with the needy, and to relieve one another by acts of kindness, to which the more civilized poor of England are strangers.

An Englishman cannot fail to remark the different behaviour of the peasantry of the two countries in one particular. We never were saluted with a bow or curtesy from any

of them, from the beginning to the end of our journey; conduct quite unnatural, and only to be accounted for by the relation in which they stand to the native gentry. I must admit, their nakedness, and shaggy hair, looking like the mane of an untamed colt, give them a forbidding aspect; and that there were occasions, when we met a troop of them on a wild bog, where we were disposed to compound for our safety, by addressing them as the Count Beaujeau did the Highlanders in Waverley, "*Gentlemans Sauvages,*" &c.

Their quarrelsome disposition, when under excitement, is a remnant of the old clannish feelings, of which there are many other instances surviving besides this very offensive one. As a set off, I may mention the willingness with which they adopt and support an orphan child, for which there is rather a competition, than a desire to avoid the burthen; and that the same usage exists with respect to foster children as existed in the Highlands. Their fights are much less frequent than formerly, being

prevented at fairs by an extra attendance of the constabulary force, which is scattered throughout the country. It is somewhat whimsical, that the names of places in this "land of ire," as Davies calls it, should be so appropriate to a pugnacious people. Killgoblin, Killkenny, Killmacthomas, Inniskilling, Killmany, Killmore, and a thousand others of like import, are the names of towns. Knockmeledown, Knockmalloch, Knockmore, is the established nomenclature for hills. Every hill, indeed, is a *knock*, and every church a *kill*.

"Who killed Kildare?—who dared Kildare to kill?"
"I killed Kildare, and dare kill whom I will."

In most cases it is extremely unfair to draw a close comparison between England and Ireland; yet in one of the municipal arrangements of the latter country, she need not yield the palm even to England. While the traveller witnesses on every side the appearances of beggary and filth, he feels he is rolling over roads as well formed and made as any he may have passed over in

more fortunate countries. In the south, where he seems to be walled in on every side by lofty ridges, he will hardly encounter a hill, so skilfully has the engineering been performed.

The following is the system on which the cross-roads are made. Notices are given within the parishes through which the proposed road is to be made, and to the owners of the soil over which it is to pass, so as to guard against any surprize. A certificate signed by two persons is delivered in to the magistrates, assembled in petty sessions for this particular purpose, according to certain forms prescribed, accompanied with such estimates, maps, and plans, as fully embrace the whole of the undertaking. The magistrates take an oath of qualification, and are sworn to act without favour or prejudice. Those who give evidence are also sworn, and any person paying cess may examine them. If the magistrates approve, the certificate is transmitted to an officer of the county, by whom it is laid before the grand jury at the assizes. The grand jury are

empowered to confirm or disallow the proceedings of the court below.

A vote of approbation enables the person who applied for the presentment immediately to construct and repair the road in question; and at the following assizes, he must be prepared with a certificate of his expenditure. This is obtained by giving notice, in the neighbourhood of the road, of his intention to apply for the same; and the magistrates, being assembled in petty sessions, examine into it, or any person paying cess, is allowed to controvert it. The magistrates either allow the bill and transmit it to the secretary of the grand jury, or they disallow any item and state their reasons. The certificate then goes before the grand jury, who use their discretion upon it; and if they are in its favour, an order is made upon the treasurer of the county for payment. Any person, however, paying cess, may controvert the certificate, and is at liberty to try the truth of the statements before a jury at the assizes or quarter sessions; or the grand jury may traverse it, to give time to

view the line of road demanded, and report on the necessity or hardship of the case. The grand jury, after they are sworn in the usual way, are also sworn particularly to their duty in the business of presentments. Any person is competent to ask for a presentment, but it is usually done by the gentry, agents, clergy, or respectable tenantry. All presentment roads must be twenty-one feet wide at least, and fourteen feet of it formed with stone or gravel.

Whatever beneficial effects may have arisen from this system of making and repairing the roads (and they must be allowed to have been very great), the mode by which the presentments are obtained and paid for is productive of great injustice. It is a patronage in the hands of the landlord, which is exercised in behalf of the tenantry for his benefit. The favour is generally granted to individuals of the grand jury, or their friends; and "in most instances," says Mr. R. P. Macdonnell in his Evidence,* "the workmen are allowed for it in land, or, as

* Fourth Report on the State of Ireland, p. 310.

the customary expression is, in their rent; and the person who gets the presentment, or for whom it is understood it is had, receives the money from the treasurer of the county."—"I know works," says the same authority, "in the county of Mayo, for which money has been granted and paid as for different roads from a market-town to the sea. In this instance, the town named consists of five or six straggling cabins, and there is no market whatever held in it; and though two or three distinct lines of road have been presented for, accounted regularly for, and paid for by the county, purporting to have been made from this mock market-town to the sea, yet there is no appearance of such roads having been made." Garden walls and sea banks, which were intended for private benefit, have been built under presentments in the same county. Frightful as these abuses are, the system, if it could be worked by landlords who had any regard for their tenantry, is substantially good; and bad as it is under the present management, it has contributed most essentially to civilize the coun-

try, increase the value of the produce of the remote districts, and also to relieve the poor in the way of furnishing employment. In the western counties, the government has also constructed roads of considerable length, partly with a view of relieving the poor, and partly for fiscal purposes. The turnpike roads, though improved, are still inferior to the cross roads.

Having spoken of the roads, it will not be out of place to say a word on the public conveyances. The heavy carriage is all performed by one-horse carts, which wear the roads very little, and being of modern introduction, contemporaneous with the roads, are made very convenient and well adapted for work.

The car is peculiar to Ireland, and that with two horses has lately been introduced with advantage as a public conveyance, by an Italian from the Lago di Como. The vehicle is constructed at little expense, and not easily overturned; the traveller being near the ground, yet quite safe from dirt.

The coaches are as well appointed as the

most restless and erratic Englishman can desire; and although the Irish gentry seldom travel in their own country, which is much to be regretted, yet business creates a great movement between the towns on the coast and the interior of the kingdom.*

The posting, like every thing else, has undergone a revolution since the period described by Miss Edgeworth. The doors of the post-chaise are no longer nailed up at starting, nor are the dilapidations of the panels repaired with brick and mortar. Augustus found Rome built of brick, and left it of marble. This is the Augustan age of Irish posting. To us, who had been

* Mr. Hugh Wallace, of Downpatrick, was asked before the Committee of the House of Commons, "Have you been to the south of Dublin at all?" "I never was," "Or in Connaught?" "No, I have not."—Mr. O'Connell was asked, "Were you ever in the county of Antrim?" "Never." "Down?" "I cannot say; if I was, it was only in passing to Monaghan." "In Derry?" "No." "In Armagh?" "Never." "Fermanagh?" "Never." "Donegal?" "Never." "Tyrone?" "Yes, passing from Monaghan to Athlone; I never was in the north, except when going specially to Monaghan."—The member for ———, replied to an interrogatory, that he had never been in the north or the south: and the member for ———, that he had never been further than Queen's County.

accustomed to travel on the Bath road, there was still enough left of the ludicrous to amuse us in the dilemmas in which we frequently seemed to be placed, but from the horns of which we always escaped. Whoever wishes to get rid of *ennui* by placing himself on the verge of disaster, without falling into it, may still do so by taking a journey on the circumference of Ireland.

The changing of horses is a very different affair at Salt Hill, and at the *Ultima Thule* of Kerry. When the traveller drives up to an inn, instead of an hostess to receive him with the clamour of bells, and a retinue of waiters, maids and men, all busy to forward him without delay, he will find himself welcomed only by female mendicants about the door. If he should refuse to yield to their importunity, and chance at the same time to stumble over the sill, one of them, it may happen, while he is writhing with anguish, will lift up her hands in petition, half in sympathy and half in sarcasm, and pray, "The Lord make your heart as tender as your toe."

The ordinary reply to a question is, as in Scotland, by repeating the interrogatory. I learnt from those who are skilled in the Irish language, that it has no words corresponding to our "Yes," or "No." Thus, if you ask if they have any post-horses, the answer will be, "Is it post-horses you are wanting? we *have*, Sir." Now, in England, you would expect that horses would be brought as a necessary consequence. Not so in Ireland, for it will frequently happen there, that the promise and the performance are widely at variance. I believe, however, such conduct is not to be attributed to a mendacious disposition, but to an anxiety to oblige; and that they are unwilling to put a negative upon your wants, until necessity compel them.

It is the business of the beggars to know exactly when the traveller departs. A penny is a day's subsistence, and it is worth their while to watch for it. More than once did we receive parting benedictions of this kind, after doling out a few halfpence: "Ten thousand blessings upon your honours, and I'll divide 'em with you."

Their imprecations are of course as replete with evil as their blessing is of good; for, after having loaded the object of their anger with maledictions, they will add a sting, infinitely pungent, and rendered the more so by the humour with which it is sheathed. Repartee, though far from being a beggarly accomplishment, is absolutely necessary to an accomplished beggar; and it must be admitted the Irish show abundance of talent in their calling.

The Irish have some expressions peculiar to themselves, and use some words in a sense different from that which they have retained in England, while there are a few of those which are common to themselves and the Americans. For instance, "handsome" for good, as "a handsome speech;" "elegant" and "lovely" in the same sense, as "elegant and lovely mutton;" and the word "store" signifies a shop and warehouse, both at Cork and New York. "Entire" for the whole, as "the entire being understood;" "on the *foot* of your doing this, I will do that," &c., is also Irish. "House

and concerns" are everywhere advertised for premises; and an English traveller is at a loss how to interpret, even with Miss Edgeworth's assistance, "dry lodgings here," and "entertainment with beds," which he may see placarded against cabins with incredibly little accommodation. At Sligo they have a current word among the better class, which condenses every other vituperative epithet, and to call a man "contankerous" is the utmost length to which their vocabulary will go.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE CONFISCATIONS—CROMWELLIAN SETTLEMENT.

THE confiscations of property in Ireland have been repeated so often, and have been attended by such peculiar circumstances, that they have had a serious influence upon the vital question of "Landlord and Tenant," and no person can reflect on the condition of the country to much purpose, without deliberately examining them. The period of the commonwealth, which may be regarded as the consummation of a train of preliminary circumstances, is the great hinge on which Irish affairs turn; for though the lords-deputies and commissioners never wanted an excuse to quarrel with the chiefs and great proprietors, whenever they coveted their estates, yet there never had been any forfeitures of such an extent as to subvert the ancient institutions. The difficulty of governing Ireland down to the epoch referred

to, was, that the persons to whom estates were granted, shook off their allegiance to England, by adopting the customs and laws of the natives, and forming alliances with the chieftains. Subsequently, the difficulty has arisen from the opposite cause, namely, that the higher and lower classes do not amalgamate; and that there is no union between the descendants of the ancient population and those of the settlers.

After the wars of York and Lancaster, scarcely a vestige of English authority remained in the hands of the then settlers, who found it much more to their interest to ally themselves with the native chiefs, and to adopt the customs and Brehon law of the country, than to be constantly at war with prejudices which they could not subdue. They not only abandoned the use of their native language, but grew ashamed of their English names, though many of them were noble, and took Irish surnames instead. Henry the Seventh had therefore to make a reconquest; but all he could do, after he had expelled Perkin Warbeck, was to pass an

act whereby the laws of England were made of force in Ireland; and that no law should thereafter be propounded in the Irish parliament that had not the approbation of the King in council. The chiefs were also restrained from making war or peace without special commission from the crown; but these laws, though they were made for the whole kingdom, had no virtual force beyond the four or five counties around Dublin, called the English Pale; and indeed could not, for want of the civil divisions of the kingdom into shires, which had not yet taken place. "Therefore," says Sir John Davies, attorney-general for Ireland in the reign of James the First, "these good laws and provisions were like good lessons set for a lute that is broken and out of tune; of which lessons little use can be made till the lute be made fit to be played on."

We find also that when Henry the Eighth attempted to reduce the country to subjection, his great difficulty was to obtain the submission of the degenerate English; and in order to prepare the minds of the people

for the introduction of wholesome laws and a pure religion, he began "with a martial course." His generals made a victorious circuit round the kingdom, conquered O'Connor, took pledges of the degenerate Desmond, and concluded by a grand and decisive battle at Belahoo. The difficulty everywhere was to obtain submission to the king; there was none in renouncing the Pope. Religion at this period had a very slight hold on the minds of the people, and they were willing to embrace any form their chiefs espoused. It was now that the great Desmond family, who were English settlers, and who owned the greater part of Munster, first submitted to the lord-deputy, taking an oath of allegiance, covenanting that they would suffer the law of England to be executed in their country, assist the king's judges in their circuits, and permit parliament to levy subsidies upon their tenants. Several of the Irish chiefs were also tempted to bow their lofty heads to the yoke, and to receive their estates by fresh grants from the crown, by the promise of earldoms, some

of which survive to the present day. Still one half of the kingdom would not suffer the king's justices to execute their commissions, but were governed by their own Brehon laws. Henry the Eighth had no other object in Ireland than to increase his revenues, which he did by confiscation, and especially by seizing the property of the abbies and religious houses, and resuming the lands of absentees. He had not the grace even to give to the Irish, ministers of his new religion.

Mary did little more than rescue King's and Queen's counties, names given in honour of herself and her consort, from the hands of two powerful chiefs. She was sanguinary in her spoliation, and massacred the very tillers of the soil, who claimed to have rights in the land independent of those they derived from their superior landlord. In the work of conversion there was nothing to perform, for there had been no defection from the old religion.

If Elizabeth was "a bright occidental star" to England, she was a consuming fire

to poor and afflicted Ireland. The Irish were unprepared for the new doctrines, which were not presented to them identified, as in the sister kingdom, with civil liberty, free inquiry in literature and science, commercial advantage, and the prosperity of the human race. Ireland at this time held no intercourse with foreigners, and she had no literature, or science. Her circulating medium was cattle, and even as late as the fire of London, when her charity sought some mode of relieving the distress occasioned by this calamity, she could only send her contribution in this incommodious form, which the English, recollecting the perfidy of the Greeks on a like occasion, sagaciously refused. The two countries, at the time of the Reformation, had few feelings and interests in common; and the rejection of antiquated opinions and the embracing of new ones, though easily achieved by the literate, is a work of slow progress with the vulgar, who are unskilled in casuistry, and are without worldly interest to pour its light upon the dark paths of religious controversy.

That Ireland was entirely overlooked in this work of conversion is clear from the statute which requires that the service of the reformed church should be performed in English;—a language not even so intelligible to the Irish as the Latin, which, it is somewhat remarkable, is understood by the common people in some parishes in Kerry at the present day. The absurdity of performing the service in English was soon discovered, for it was supplanted by another attempt equally abortive, as in the *2nd Eliz., cap.* 1, 2, 3, it was enacted, that in every church, where the minister hath no knowledge of the English tongue, it may be lawful for him to officiate in Latin.

The two grand objects of the policy of the queen's reign, was to obtain the forfeitures of the O'Neils' property in the north, comprehending the province of Ulster, and the Desmond property in the south, embracing Munster. Her servants, who always had an eye to confiscation, managed to pick quarrels with both these great chieftains. The fate of O'Neil is one of deep interest.

He was descended from ancient Irish blood; brave, generous, frank, and talented, and he was betrayed. His vast estates were vested in the crown, and divided among jobbing adventurers, chiefly the sons and dependents of persons about the court, who, with all the power of government to support them, could not hold their possessions against the Irish population. In addition to the hostility of the native tenantry, they were secretly thwarted by individuals, who had been longer in the country; and who thought they had a better title to the spoil than new-comers, as having contrived and accomplished the seizure. The whole attempt of these adventurers was consequently a failure.

The Earl of Desmond was descended from one of the Strongbonian settlers, and had by right of grant nearly the whole province of Munster in the south. His vast estates were ravaged with fire and sword, and the queen's servants, having their appetites for blood whetted by their disappointments in the north, delivered up to

slaughter and famine the innocent population of the country, determined that the *Irishry* should not again frighten and drive them from their new acquisitions. The Desmond war is the darkest transaction of the queen's government, and involves in it two of the fairest names in England's roll—Raleigh and Spenser. Each of them shared in the spoil. The Raleigh property, consisting of upwards of 40,000 acres in the counties of Cork and Waterford, gotten by favouritism, in defiance of the queen's compact, was afterwards sold, when he was in disgrace, at an insignificant price to the great Earl of Cork;* while Spenser for his share obtained a grant of 3000 acres.

All the forfeited lands were directed to be divided into manors and seignories, containing 12,000, 8000, 6000, and 4000 acres

* Boyle, the first Earl of Cork, was the most prosperous man of his age. He went to Ireland pennyless; accumulated by grant and by purchase the best part of the counties of Cork and Waterford, lost and won his estates again, and left behind him a fortune, which, when divided between three noble families, leaves an ample competence for each. It was of this *Boyle* that a certain peeress said—that, in comparison with him, all his descendants had been nothing but *pimples*.

each, according to a plan laid down. The undertakers were to have an estate in fee-farm, yielding for each seignory of 12,000 acres, for the first three years, 33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*, *viz.* from 1590 to 1593; and from Michaelmas, 1593, 66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*, and rateably for every inferior seignory, yielding upon the death of the undertaker the best beast as a heriot. The estates were to be discharged of all taxes whatever, excepting subsidies levied by parliament. Bogs, mountains, &c., were not to be included until improved, and then to pay one halfpenny for every English acre. None were to be permitted to have more than 12,000 acres, and no English planter was allowed to let, or otherwise convey, to any mere Irish. Every owner was to impark the tenth of his grant for the breeding of horses, &c. The head of each plantation was to be English; and the heirs female were compelled to marry none but of English birth, while it was forbidden that the Irish should be maintained in any family.

The northern plantation having failed entirely in consequence of leaving the tenantry

of O'Neil in occupation of the soil, it was determined, in order to ensure the success of this southern experiment, to remove the whole population from the settled lands, and to drive them back to the mountains and bogs, which were not worth the forfeiture. Nevertheless, it was hardly more fortunate. The settlers found themselves without tenants, without labourers, and their fine lands consequently running into a wilderness. Their only mode was to abandon the system of plantation, and make terms with the natives of the soil, or such as could be found. The English farmers not being strong enough to stem the opposition, abandoned their project, disposed of their leases to the Irish, and returned home, leaving only the more opulent grantees, who had the ear of government, and whose extent of property would pay the expense of protection. The Earl of Cork improved his estates by building or enlarging the towns of Bandon, Dungarvon, Youghall, and Lismore, which he colonized with his English partisans.

The sovereigns of England, always affect-

ing to be deeply concerned for the civilization of Ireland, and not disinclined to gratify, nor perhaps able to resist, the rapacity of their faithful servants, who were rewarded there by confiscations at little expense, were constantly labouring to introduce the laws and institutions of England. As the Irish were reluctant to adopt these innovations, it was not difficult for their enemies to stigmatize them with the name of rebels, till at length it was openly avowed by the government of Elizabeth and her successors, that a people who adhered so pertinaciously to their own laws and customs, and would not be reclaimed, ought to be swept from the face of the earth, and that the mildest treatment was banishment to the wastes and bogs of their own country. This mischievous and iniquitous principle attained the full bloom of its deformity during the Cromwellian period, and is not abandoned at this day by a considerable party in Ireland.

The old proprietors, Irish and Anglo-Irish, took a different view of the subject at a meeting where the commission for distri-

bution was opened. The learned attorney-general of James the First has left behind the arguments he employed to convince them of their error. He tells them that the king is lord paramount, that they hold of him; and that he, guided by conscience, law, and honour, having a people committed by Divine Providence to his charge and government, is bound to reduce them from barbarism to civility. "This transplantation of the natives is made," says he, "by his majesty, rather like a father than like a lord or monarch. The Romans planted whole nations out of Germany into France; the Spaniards lately removed all the Moors out of Grenada into Barbary without providing them with any new seats there; when the English Pale was first planted, all the natives were clean expelled, so as not one Irish family had so much as an acre of freehold in all the five counties of the Pale; and now within these four years past the Greames were removed from the borders of Scotland to this kingdom, and had not one foot of land allotted to them here; but these natives,

now proposed to be removed, are only removed to worse lands."

It was the folly of James that he would do everything despotically, else he would have commanded the approbation of posterity for much that he did for Ireland. He extended, more than any of his predecessors, the administration of the English law to all the counties. He sent commissioners into the north to adjust the differences between the superior and tributary lords; abolished the *cosherings*, *sessings*, and other exactions taken from the inferior tenants, and fixed an annual sum to be taken in lieu thereof, and gave them in many cases an estate of inheritance independent of the chief. When the lord deputy, lord chancellor, and lord chief justice, with others, went for the first time into Monaghan, to hold the commission of assize and gaol delivery, and to settle the possession of lands, they camped out at night, and held their courts in tents, attended by one hundred and fifty foot soldiers and fifty horse. It would seem by the account of one of the commissioners, that the justices

of assize had some difficulty with these wild subjects. One Grand Jury was so well chosen, that they found with good expedition all the bills of indictment true; but on the other side, the petty jury acquitted them as fast, the whole county consisting of their kith and kin. They did, however, manage to convict two notorious fellows, caterers for the resident gentry of the beef belonging to the English Pale, who were ordered to be hung forthwith, and they were hung accordingly. They found the churches in ruins, even within the Pale, so that the common people had no place to resort to; and in the unreformed counties, the churches were utterly waste, the incumbents being popish priests, instituted by Roman bishops. The protestant bishop had never been in the diocese, and, indeed, had never been appointed until king James, two years before the commission, had done so.

From Monaghan these learned persons went the first night to the ruins of the abbey of Cluneys, where they encamped; and going from thence by ways almost impassa-

ble by reason of the woods and bogs, they came the second night after to Lough Earne, and pitched their tents; a place being prepared for the holding of the sessions for Fermanagh, in the ruins of an abbey near. The lord-deputy reserved to his own discretion the disposition and settling of the lands of inheritance, leaving unto others the criminal and civil business. It would seem that the custom of Gavelkind, a tenure which was common to the Celts, though somewhat different from a similar custom in Kent, was supposed to be the prevalent cause of murders and rebellions. It had already broken down the estates to petty fractions and divisions, so that they found the number of freeholders excessive. As families multiplied, their possessions were divided and subdivided, until at last every rood supported its man, who termed himself a lord, and his portion of land, in imitation of his superiors, his country. About this time the custom, to which such evil consequences were attributed, was declared by all the judges to be void in law. It will

hardly be credited, that afterwards, when hatred to popery tainted every Irish transaction, it was attempted to be re-established; for in 1708, a bill was passed for breaking down the great Catholic families, whereby it was provided, that all estates should be equally distributed among the children of papists, notwithstanding any settlements to the contrary*.

The success of my lords the king's justices in Fermanagh seems to have disappointed them, for they could not hang one man, but were obliged to fine the justices for neglect. There was not a village in all the county fit for a market or corporate town.

They then went to Cavan, and pitched their tents on the south side of that then poor Irish town. The lord-deputy issued his commission to inquire into all the lands in this county escheated by reason of rebellion; and, having empannelled the best knights and gentlemen in the English interest, they

* Burnett's Own Time, vol. v., p. 167.

readily found, that several generations of O'Ryleys had been slain in rebellion, and consequently their lands, which comprehended nearly the whole county, were seized by the crown. They found the churches in a similar condition to those in Monaghan, but the parsons worse; for they appeared to be such poor, ragged, and ignorant creatures, as they could not esteem any of them worthy of the meanest of the livings, albeit many of them were not worth forty shillings per annum. Although the protestant bishop resided here, being a person born in the country, and with abundance of pluralities, having, besides other preferment, two bishoprics, there was no divine service or sermon to be heard within either of his dioceses. As the people were unacquainted with any other language than their own, it was in vain to provide them with English clergy. They could be no other than Catholics; yet cupidity invented a plea why they should be persecuted for not embracing Protestantism.

The plantation of Ulster was James's

grand and favourite scheme. His quarrel with the great northern chieftain O'Neil, the descendant of him whom Elizabeth had persecuted, placed at his disposal 500,000 acres of land; and although the king had confirmed the titles of the inferior tenants, he seized alike upon theirs as upon O'Neil's, under whom they held. The lands of Ulster were disposed of by grant or sale to new proprietors, English or lowland Scotch, but chiefly the latter, that nation having already a considerable footing in the north of Ireland, and being closely connected with the northern Irish by blood and affinity. Part of the scheme was, according to the rule laid down in all other settlements of this kind, to exclude the natives; but this was found impracticable, as it had been in all former instances, though it was more nearly effected on this occasion than before. This settlement was remarkable, inasmuch as some of the trading companies of London became chief undertakers of the forfeited lands; and they have had no reason to repent of their bargain, for at the present moment they are,

in consequence, the wealthiest companies in the city. To their credit it may be stated, that they are some of the best landlords in Ireland. A new order of nobility was also created, one hundred persons being allowed to purchase the dignity of baronet at 100*l.* each, on the pretext that the amount should be devoted to the civilization and settlement of Ulster; but little or none of it ever found its way into this channel.

James also contemplated the *plantation* of Connaught, and he thought the undertaking too righteous to require him to be scrupulous about the means by which it was to be accomplished. He had already extracted heavy fines from the proprietors of that inhospitable district, to induce him to cure some defects in the grants of queen Elizabeth. It so happened that the grants of James, by the neglect of the officer of the court, were not enrolled in Chancery. Accordingly, the king proposed to take advantage of this clerical omission, and to seize all the estates where the irregularity existed. While the proprietary of Connaught

were negotiating with him the amount of the penalty they should pay to enable them to retain their estates, death stepped in and closed the discussion, and thus put an end to the royal cupidity.

Charles the First, goaded on by the puritans, and not unwilling to profit by this nefarious transaction, took up the wicked project of settling Connaught. He extorted from the proprietors there, and from others, large sums of money, under the pretext of quieting some defect of title, and seventy thousand pounds were paid by the city of London to confirm their estates. The wound he thus gave the city in its most sensitive nerve was never forgiven, and contributed more than anything else to bring him to his tragical end.

The unpopularity of Charles in England encouraged the Irish proprietors on the Continent, who had been banished or chose a voluntary exile, to conspire together to drive out the settlers; and the parliament was well pleased to see this rebellion, in

order to weaken the power of the king at home. The Anglo-Irish lords, being Catholics, were treated harshly, and looked upon with suspicion by the English. They, therefore, though unwillingly and tardily, joined the Irish. The Catholic priesthood assembled in general synod at Kilkenny; and, from being a negligent, lax, and careless body, were changed at once into an active, proselyting, and influential clergy. They roused the whole population, and with little difficulty, and abundance of retaliation, wrested the land from the new settlers, and threw the whole kingdom into the greatest confusion. But the Irish, somehow or other, true to their original character, always have managed to defeat themselves. Jealousies sprang up between the Confederates (the name given to this Anglo-Irish and Irish union); their titles were less valid than those of the settlers whom they had ousted, and there was no paramount authority to divide the spoil. Cromwell after a while stepped in, and by decision, skill, and craft,

seized nearly the whole country to himself and his soldiers. This is the great epoch which divides the history of Ireland.

Down to this period the settlers, however unjustly they might have acquired their possessions, had managed to hold them by mixing and amalgamating with the natives, and forming social ties with them. There was no complaint that the proprietors of the soil wanted the influence and controul which naturally belong to persons in that condition. On the contrary, they abused the authority they had acquired over the people by making war upon the Pale, ravaging the estates of that favoured district, and *lifting* their cattle. They threw off their allegiance to the mother country, and set up as petty sovereigns for themselves. The marriages of the English with the Irish were regarded by the contemporary writers as the chief obstacle to reducing the people to subjection. Every method was taken by the government to prevent these alliances, which at one time were declared to be high treason. Again, if any man of English race

should use an Irish name, the Irish language, or wear Irish apparel, and he had lands or tenements, the same were directed to be seized until he had given security to Chancery to conform himself in all points to the English manner of living. If he had no lands, his body was to be taken, and imprisoned until he found sureties.

Sir Henry Piers, who wrote a description of West Meath in 1682, ranks the marriages of the English with the Irish as the chief hinderance to the subjection of the people. "In too many great families," he says, "the English become, in a few generations, one both in manners and interest with the Irish; insomuch as many of them have not doubted to assume even Irish names and appellations. Instances hereof are but too many, even this very day: thus a Birmingham is called by them a Mc. Yore; Fitz-Simons, Mc. Kuddery; and Wellesley, Mc. Falrene; and from men thus metamorphosed what can be expected? But to evidence the great evils that ensue on these mixtures, we have a very late instance in one Tar-

rington, some years since hanged in Connaught, as a Tory. This fellow was the son of an English soldier, who came over in the late war, and quartered at Athlone. He, marrying an Irish woman and dying, left a younger son to her tuition. She bred him up after her manner; and he had so far degenerated in his generation, that on his trial he could not speak one word of English, and appeared with less either of English manners or demeanour, than the meanest of the Irish themselves. But too many instances of this sort could be brought nearer home. I know the sons of Englishmen in my neighbourhood, who are already become Irish both in interest, education, and religion, and very little differing from this Tarrington of whom we have spoken."*

The Cromwellians adopted, still more fiercely than the Stuarts, this idea of preventing all alliance between the settlers and the natives, and of rooting out the old Irish. The Reformation, under Henry the Eighth,

* Vallancey's Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis, vol. i., p. 195.

had only modified the ancient doctrine of church authority; the Independents absolved themselves from it altogether, excepting as it squared with their reason, and, perhaps, with their inclination, and left every man to choose a religion for himself. The doctrinal differences of the first Reformation were not very obvious to the people; those of the second were more palpable, tenable, and flattering to human pride; and the church of England, though she has not altered the letter of her articles, has found it necessary to abandon the middle ground which she took, and now adopts in practice some of the essential doctrines of puritanism.

The policy by which the English parliament of that period was actuated, was to alienate the people as much as possible from the old religion. An abhorrence of popery was found useful, because it included an abhorrence of despotism; but when the same passion was transferred to Irish ground, it was the ruin of the country. It was not what Cromwell himself desired; but it was impossible to separate, in his soldiers' and

adventurers' minds, after the quarrel between the king and parliament at home had become identified with religion, that a Bourbon papist might be dangerous, while an Irish one might be innocuous. The soldiers who were selected for the invasion of Ireland, are described to have been the intractable and fanatical spirits which Cromwell wished to get rid of. They were "levellers;" and went over imbued with the most virulent *odium theologicum*, regarding themselves as the chosen instruments of Divine Providence to execute his wrath against his enemies, and believing that they were waging war against Antichrist. *How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not avenge our blood,* was the triumphal song of the camp.

Whitelock says, before the soldiers embarked, that "after three ministers had engaged in prayer, lieutenant-general Cromwell himself, and the colonels Gough and Harrison, expounded some parts of the Scripture excellently well, and pertinently

to the occasion. The army was under severe discipline; not an oath was to be heard throughout the whole camp, the soldiers spending their leisure hours in reading their Bibles, in singing psalms, and religious conferences." Cromwell, on his arrival, was received with the acclamations of a vast concourse of people, to whom he addressed himself from a rising ground, with hat in hand, in a soldier-like manner, telling them "he was come to cut down and destroy the barbarous and bloodthirsty Irish, with all their adherents; but that all who were for the Protestant religion, and the liberties of their country, should find suitable encouragement from the parliament of England and himself, in proportion to their merits."*

The conduct of Cromwell and his army, as might be expected from this opening of the drama, was vindictive, sanguinary, and unrelenting. Drunk with success in their own country, and imagining they would sin

* Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. ii., p. 380.

in sparing, they spared not age, or sex, or childhood. Tired with slaughter, they transported thousands to the West Indies and the Continent, and it has been calculated that 200,000 Irish quitted their country in despair. The Cromwellians treated Ireland as a conquest, and therefore as possessing no rights. The Catholic clergy were ordered to quit the country, upon pain of death; and those who were hardy enough to remain, exercised their ministry in caverns and cliffs of the rocks, and established the faith of a careless, irreligious, and ignorant people, by a species of evangelization well suited to captivate their rude imaginations.

The consequences were fatal. The soldiers and adventurers, when they became landed proprietors, were totally alienated from the natives: the rich and the poor met not together; and the proprietary and tenantry, instead of being the protectors of each other, which is the condition of that social relation, regarded one another with reciprocal horror. This was breaking up

the constituent elements of society; and if it be asked how it has happened that this fermentation has not yet subsided, but continues to throw up to the present day its impurities, sufficient reasons may be found.

Protestants ask, Why will not the people be converted, and amalgamated with the English? Because, in the first place, at the time of the Reformation, the Irish had no opportunity of imbibing liberal political opinions, and identifying them with the cause of protestantism, if they had been inclined; they were cut off from the rest of Europe: and because no exertions were made by England to establish the reformed religion, while the old proprietary were in alliance with the people. The tenantry of every other country have adopted the religion which they found espoused by their superiors; and it is an accusation, very dissimilar to an unaccommodating spirit in this particular, alleged by Sir William Petty against the Irish, that they seem rather to obey their grandees, old landlords, and the

heads of their septs and clans, than God. It was left to the new landlords to make a signal and melancholy exception to a universal rule. Protestant bishops were given them, a short supply of English clergy, and an English Liturgy; but what could these avail, where the natives were ignorant of the language of their teachers, and where there was no link of connexion between the clergy and the people? The catholic priests were at the time ignorant, poor, and despicable enough; and they had no hold on the chiefs, who were ready to throw their religion overboard, if they could have secured their property, but the English never attempted to convert them, but when they demanded at the same moment their religion and their estates,—and can it be wondered that they and their serfs resisted? In England, the reformers asked the people to abandon their old religion, and save their property; and the choice was soon made. Here it was a war made *by* the people, there *upon* the people. Here it was a war upon despotism, there a war upon property.

The religion which had been transplanted by Cromwell to the soil of Ireland was of a motley character, different shades of Protestantism, but chiefly Independents, Presbyterians, and Baptists. It was unsuited to the climate to which it was transferred, and was unsupported by the popular preachers who were so acceptable to the English. The north-eastern counties, settled by James, being chiefly of Scotch origin, had already adopted the presbyterian form of protestantism, but they entertained the same rooted antipathies to the Roman church as the sects brought in by Cromwell. Numerous meeting-houses were built by the several new professors; but they have disappeared, excepting the presbyterian places in the north, and a few independents and baptists in the large towns, the poor having gone over to the Catholics, while most of the wealthy, induced by the ties of their rank more than by those of their sect, have become members of the establishment. Their places of worship which remain are frequented by the middling and upper

classes, and are not, as in England, the resort of the poor. They are regarded by the Established Church without jealousy; and are tinctured with the dye of Orangeism. The Arian sect of the Presbyterians, which has been recently severed for religious, and probably, political heresy, are, on the contrary, identified with the liberal party. The Quakers, as in England, have undergone but little change, and, with some exceptions, adhere to the Orange standard.

It is curious to remark the different course which the Cromwellians took in the two countries. In England, they were mere soldiers, who melted down, after the Restoration, with the inferior classes; in Ireland they obtained land, continued to fill the highest offices in the State, and their descendants are still the aristocracy of the country. In England, they survive among the dissenters: in Ireland, they became identified with the Established Church, and their opinions, their language, their customs and peculiarities, are represented at the present day by the Orange party. In Eng-

land, they resumed their habits of industry, and became successful traders and manufacturers; in Ireland they became independent, but many of them knew not how to play the part of gentlemen, and degenerated into an idle, improvident, and needy class of adventurers, and hucksterers in land. In England, they lost their power, and were compelled to relinquish the high ground they had taken; in Ireland they kept the army at their disposal, obliged the king to moderate his demands, and saved themselves from falling into the hands of despotism. They had power enough to extract from Charles the Second a confirmation of all their titles by a solemn act of the legislature; and it may mitigate the severity of censure to recollect, that, in this instance, those who had acquired their estates by wrong in Ireland, materially assisted those who held by right in England, and who were struggling hard for their liberty.

The mass of the population, with the exception of that part of Ulster planted by king James, whence the natives had been

nearly all expelled, and of some of the great towns and the Pale, where the interest of the inhabitants had been uninterruptedly English, were all Catholics; and these were made liable, by an act of confiscation which passed into a law the 12th of August, 1652, either to entire forfeiture, or the loss in some cases of two-thirds, in others of one-third of what they possessed. Those most favoured were still, at the pleasure of the parliamentary commissioners, liable to be transplanted from the place of their residence, and to have assigned them, in room of their possessions, lands of equivalent value in some other parts of the island. Such as had no estates to the value of ten pounds, and were not comprehended in any former exceptions, were pardoned.

By the provisions of another Act for distributing the land thus confiscated, and passed 26th September, 1653, ten counties, namely, Limerick, Tipperary, Waterford, King's County, Queen's County, West Meath, East Meath, Down, Antrim, and Armagh, were appropriated, so much of each

as was forfeited,—one half for the satisfaction of the adventurers who had advanced money for the conquest of Ireland, and the other half for discharging the arrears of the army, which had accrued since the 5th of June, 1649. The forfeited lands in the counties of Dublin, Cork, Kildare, and Carlow, were reserved for the disposal of parliament. The rest of the forfeited lands in the provinces of Munster, Leinster, and Ulster, were appropriated first to the making up the deficiencies, if any, in the produce of the ten first named counties, secondly, to discharge the arrears to the army, which had accrued before the 5th of January, 1649; and thirdly, for the satisfaction of debts of whatever kind, that should appear to be due from the public. There was also a reserve made for the erection of free schools, and the setting up of manufactures, for building places of worship, and bridges, and for the making of high ways. The rest of the lands were to be sold or let to such protestants as might be inclined to occupy them. This act further directed that the province of Connaught, and

all lands west of the Shannon, should be reserved for the future residence of the Irish catholics: but it was found impossible to provide for them all; and the next year instructions were sent over to the commissioners, then administering the affairs of Ireland, authorizing them to dispense with the orders for transporting the native Irish, in cases where they should deem it safe to suffer them to remain behind.

Sir William Petty sums up the results in the following particulars. "The British Protestants and Church have three-fourths of all the lands; five-sixths of all the housing; nine-tenths of all the housing in walled towns and places of strength, two-thirds of the foreign trade. Six of eight of all the Irish live in a brutish, nasty condition; as in cabins with neither chimney, door, stairs, nor window, feeding chiefly upon milk and potatoes, whereby their spirits are not disposed for war. And that although there be in Ireland eight papists for three others, (and excepting the Scots, twenty papists for one other,) yet there are far more soldiers and

soldier-like men of this latter and lesser number, than of the former*."

But in the accounts published by the Cromwellian proprietors, of which there is no reason to doubt the accuracy, the surface of Ireland was estimated at 10,400,000 Irish acres†. Of these, they counted that there were 3,000,000 of unprofitable land, consisting of wood, mountain, bog, &c. Of the remaining 7,400,000, 2,400,000 were computed to be in the hands of Protestant proprietors, previous to the war of the confederation in 1641. At this period they estimated the Catholic property in land to be 5,000,000 of acres.

"In 1653, when the Cromwellian war was announced by proclamation to have ceased, they state these 5,000,000 of acres to have been disposed of by the Cromwellian government as follows:—Restored to Catholic proprietors, 100,000 acres; to

* Political Anatomy of Ireland.

† Beaufort estimates the area of Ireland at several thousands above 12,000,000 Irish acres; Wakefield at 12,722,615; Petty at 10,500,000; others at 11,067,712. These estimates, however, include the lakes and rivers.

Catholic proprietors who proved *innocency* before Cromwell's commissioners at Loughrea, and at Athlone, and were decreed restitution or compensation in the province of Connaught and the county of Clare, about 700,000 acres.

"To the officers and soldiers who served in Ireland before the arrival of Cromwell in 1649, in Wicklow, Longford, Leitrim, Donegal, and between the sea and the Shannon, about 400,000 acres.

"To the adventurers who advanced money under the acts of the 17th and 18th of Charles the First, to carry on the war in Ireland, about 800,000 acres.

"To several individuals, favourites of Cromwell, &c. &c. &c., about 100,000 acres.

"Retained in the hands of government for its own use, but let to British Protestants upon profitable leases in the counties of Dublin, Louth, Cavan, and Kildare, about 800,000 acres, besides a considerable number of houses in the cities and walled towns*."

* O'Driscol's History of Ireland, vol. i., p. 334.

It would appear from this account, that 800,000 acres only were left in the hands of the old Irish. The residue, 9,600,000 acres, was divided among the new proprietors, of which 2,500,000 were seized from former settlers. This was little less than a virtual resumption of the whole country. "I know of but one instance," says Mr. O'Connell, in his evidence before a select committee of the House of Commons on the state of Ireland, "within the scope of my own knowledge, of a property that never was forfeited, and I possess that myself."

The war of James the Second was for sovereignty, not for property; and the seizures that were made by king William tended to strengthen, and not to weaken the former grants. The treaty of Limerick closed the tragical scene; and it would have been gratifying, if these battles, so dear to the recollections of Protestants, had been won by the valour of men who could not only fight to acquire possessions but to retain them; but, seduced by ease and prosperity, the martial spirit of the settlers had

evaporated, and our debt of gratitude is incalculably small. The Enniskilleners and Derry men, who fought well, were a small remnant of fanatics, who had not lost the turbulent character of their fathers.

In this manner was the whole kingdom divided between the soldiers and the adventurers; and when their peculiar character is recollected, their unfitness to become the lords of the soil which they did not understand, and of a people whom they despised, their religious hatred, their mercantile spirit, their disregard of everything but their money interest, we may, I think, obtain the clue to a great deal of the subsequent mischief. We have fortunately for our guide the agricultural system of the Highlands of Scotland, and very minute particulars of the relation which subsisted there between the Laird and his people. Ireland, we know, was in the same state down to the time of the confiscations; and, as Spenser says, *Spend me and defend me*, was the great link between the Irish chief and his vassals. I propose in the next chapter to draw a comparison

between the old and the new system, and I think I shall be able to prove that no proprietary can hope to govern their people, as long as they are agricultural, by treating land as money, and disregarding all those other advantages which money cannot purchase, and which naturally belonged to the ancient relation that existed between the proprietor and occupier of the soil.

CHAPTER III.

TENURES OF LAND—LANDLORD AND TENANT.

THE most frightful part of the Irish system is the relation that subsists between landlord and tenant. It has grown out of the peculiar circumstances of the country; and though many complicated and obscure causes have co-operated to produce mischief, this may be regarded, without hesitation, as the most essential ingredient. It will, therefore, be desirable to take a glance at the nature of the usual tenures under which land is held in the country, in order to prepare the reader for the observations which follow.

In consequence of the distracted state of the kingdom after the great settlement, multitudes of the English, finding themselves uneasy in their situation, returned to their own country, while others who had obtained enormous grants had never left it. As few

purchasers could be found, many of these grantees leased their estates to residents for 999 years, or, as it is called, "in perpetuity;" while others, upon payment of a fine, leased them upon lives with a covenant to renew for ever. As the proprietors did not anticipate the extraordinary rise in land, which has constantly been going on, they were content to receive the times' price, and relieve themselves from all further trouble and anxiety. The lessees of these estates were generally needy adventurers, and whenever there was an advance in the value of land, they made their profit by dividing the estate and granting under-leases. Many of the little gentry, and some of the great ones, of the present day, are persons whose ancestors obtained land in this manner.

These leases in perpetuity have also been frequently created long since the Cromwellian settlement by persons who became dissatisfied with the country, or whose necessities obliged them to raise money. There are several estates in Ireland of 30,000 and 50,000 acres which have been thus let;

sometimes upon the consideration of a fine and a small rent, at other times, by paying the rack-rent of the time when the lease was granted. It frequently happens that the owner of the fee gets imputed to him all the mismanagement and oppressive conduct of the intermediate landlord; and I saw lately a very unfounded accusation of "clearing" made against the Marquis of Lansdown, who has the misfortune to hold property of vast extent of this nature. As he is the representative of Sir William Petty, the surveyor-general of Ireland, who never lost sight of improving his fortune, and who boasted, when he had evicted the Duke of Ormond out of some lands, that he had witnesses who would have sworn for him through a three-inch board, the noble Marquis possesses land in almost every county, and he has fully shown that, where it is under his entire control, he is liberal and kind, and employs agents who have imbibed the same spirit.

The second class of cases is where the original landlord leases his estates for sixty-

one or thirty-one years, and two or three lives, in large quantities, taking a fine upon renewal. In these cases, the lessee also leases out in smaller portions to under-tenants; and as it has been the general practice not to restrain the tenant from under-letting, even to the minutest fraction, he always does it in order to secure to himself the largest profit. The most extraordinary instance of the sixty-one years' lease with lives, is the vast estate of the Marquis of Donegal, which, if it were not thus incumbered, would exceed in value any other in the three kingdoms. As far as the public is concerned, the circumstance is not to be regretted; as it is now in the hands of several noblemen, gentlemen, and others, instead of being the property of an individual. With the exception of this estate, these leases are now the least frequent mode of letting in large properties.

The third class of leases is for the term of twenty-one years and three lives, or twenty-one years alone, granted either by the original landlord, or by the intermediate holder.

Leases for a shorter duration are also common; as for seven years, three years, and among the lowest tenants, from year to year, while the very lowest take land upon the "conacre" system, which is the right to plant the crop, the ploughing and manuring being done by the landlord.

The difficulty of getting possession of land, and the poverty of the tenants, has upheld to a very great extent the system of partnership farms, frequently consisting of fifteen or twenty partners. They are bound, jointly and severally, to pay the rent and fulfil the covenants. Each tenant brings in his proportion of stock and labour, erects his own cabin, and shares in the profit and loss according to the terms of the arrangement, which is often extremely difficult to be understood. This system prevailed also in the Highlands, the tenants residing together in what was called a "town." The land was held, as there expressed, "run-rig," or like common field land in England, only in smaller patches, with the right of intercommoning upon the mountain pasture.

It is the first step from the whole people holding and working in common. A collection of cabins, built upon land thus occupied, is called "a village" in Ireland. These villages are most frequent in the poor lands, and in the western counties. Dr. Kelly, the Catholic archbishop of Tuam, stated, in his evidence "On the State of Ireland," that he knew a farm in his neighbourhood which was originally leased to about twenty families, and he recollected to have seen sixty families afterwards living upon the same farm; and this was done without any intervention of the landlord, but grew naturally out of the increase of the population. He also confirms a very important statement, that marriages are not so frequent in prosperous districts, as in those which are impoverished.

Mr. Wakefield reports, that at Woodlawn "it is common to grant leases for three lives, or thirty-one years, to an indefinite number of persons, very often twenty, who, by law, are joint tenants, and entitled to the benefit of survivorship. This has been

an old-established practice, handed down from father to son for many generations. These people divide the land, and give portions to their children, which consist of a fourth or fifth of what they call 'a man's share,' that is, of the land which originally belonged to one name in the lease. A certain portion of the whole farm, or *take*, as it is styled, is appropriated to tillage; and this portion is then divided into lots, perhaps twenty or thirty. These lots are again subdivided into fields, which are portioned into smaller lots, each partner obtaining one or two ridges; but these ridges do not continue in the hands of the same occupier longer than the time they are in tillage. The pasture is held in common, and the elders of the village are the legislators, who establish such regulations as may be deemed proper for their community, and settle all disputes that may arise among them*." Mr. Wakefield, however, says, of this village system generally, that "it gives rise to continual wrangling, and pertinacious litigation, for

* Account of Ireland, vol. i., p. 260.

trifles scarcely worth a straw." Indeed, a litigious spirit, or, as they term it, "to get law," is very characteristic of the peasantry.

The feeble administration of the English law has invited the Celtic inhabitants, and the foreigners who have colonized particular spots, to retain many of their peculiar habits and customs. In the island of Tory in the county of Donegal, and other places, the natives are still unacquainted with any other law than that of the Brehon code. They choose their own chief magistrate from among themselves; and to his mandates, issued from a throne of turf, the people yield a cheerful and willing obedience*. Several modifications of the custom of gavelkind may still be detected in the practices of the old inhabitants. It is a common occurrence for the land of the father to be divided among the sons from generation to generation, until the division becomes too small to afford subsistence; and partnerships are also frequently grounded upon family interests.

* Dewar's "Observations on the Irish," p. 164.

At Carrick Macross, I was informed, is a colony of Anglo-Irish, where 38,000 people are living upon 36,000 acres of land. It now belongs to Lord Bath and Mr. Shirley, but was originally settled by Fitz-Urse, one of the murderers of Thomas à Becket.

At the latter end of the seventeenth century, when the French laid the Palatinate waste, many colonies of Palatines were invited over to Ireland by the proprietors, and induced to settle, chiefly in the county of Limerick, with a view to introduce industrious habits and a better system of agriculture into the country. It was thought that these people would be more acceptable to the Irish, than their enemies the English. Most of these little colonies continue to the present day, and still cling to the customs and practices of their forefathers. They live in villages, and have a burgomaster of their own choosing, to settle disputes. They continue still to be more industrious than the natives, while the appearance of their houses and farms is superior. For some time after their settlement they slept, according to the

practice of their own country, between two beds, and fed on sour crout; but by degrees they have adopted the Irish manner of living. Their farms are still distinguished by the superiority of the buildings, these having been generally erected by the landlord, and not, as is usual in other cases, by the tenant. The women retain their proverbial industry; and the story mentioned by Arthur Young is still current, that they have such a passion for labour, that in a very pinching season they do not refuse to yoke themselves with a horse to finish the ploughing of their husbands. The Irish women cannot be persuaded to ted the hay; an employment not thought elsewhere to be derogatory to the sex, and they probably invented this joke against the good Palatines.

Some of the best landlords in Ireland at the present time are the English nobility and gentry, who have adopted on their Irish estates the practices which they have pursued in England; the attention which has recently been awakened to Irish affairs, having roused them to remedy some of the evils complained

of. At the time Mr. Wakefield wrote his "Account of Ireland," the Duke of Devonshire's large property was among the worst managed. To the credit of that nobleman, it is now among the best. Bridges, town-halls, inns, and new houses, are erected in his towns; and new farm buildings, fences, and roads, are seen everywhere on his estates in the country*. A great improvement has taken place on many other estates, and it would have afforded me pleasure to have mentioned several instances of this nature which I witnessed, but that the particularising a few would be rather the result of accident, than from any general comparison I was able to make.

Most authors who have treated of the affairs of Ireland, have attributed her distressed condition to the great number of absentee proprietors, and the consequent existence of agents and middle men. I am

* It is said that the Duke, having read Mr. Wakefield's account of his Irish estates, was so struck with it, that he suffered no time to be lost before he was at Lismore castle; upon which occasion he entirely changed the management, and put it upon its present liberal footing.

not disposed to quarrel with their animadversions; yet I apprehend these are to be regarded as consequences rather than as causes of the degradation of the country. The immediate disadvantages which arise to the tenantry, such as the loss of a market at home for their produce, the diminution of the circulating medium, the absence of a higher standard of living, and of the moral example which might be expected from such as are better educated, are, without doubt, of great moment; yet there are several remoter and less-observed evils, the result of non-residence, which have not been treated of as they deserve, and to which I am convinced are to be imputed in a great degree the mischief we have to deplore.

Absenteeism, much as it is to be reprobated, is not sufficient to account for the degraded state of the tenantry; for it must be recollected that it is not a system peculiarly Irish, but prevails to a great extent in every country; and agents and middle men exist in a varied form almost every where. A Russian nobleman at Petersburgh,

of whom Mr. Malthus asked some questions respecting the management of his estate, told him, that he never troubled himself to enquire whether it was properly cultivated or not. *Cela m'est égal,* said he, *cela me fait ni bien ni mal.* The large farms about Rome and at Pisa, extending over a considerable district, described by Chateauvieux, are cultivated by agents. In many parts of Germany, the princes farm through their bailiffs to an enormous extent. In France there are still everywhere large estates which are thus managed, the proprietors living either in Paris or the large towns. The *tacksmen* of Scotland held a very great proportion of her soil, without producing similar results; and the greater part of the landed property throughout England is managed by persons intermediate between the landlord and the tenant. The middle men in Ireland, who have long leases, are, to all intents and purposes, the real and efficient owners of the estate, and have as deep an interest in the welfare of their tenants as if they were in possession of the fee. I know not that

any difference exists between those estates which are in the hands of the original landlord, and those which are sublet to intermediate persons. As far as I could observe, the same defects prevailed throughout; always making exceptions of certain individuals belonging to each class, who had introduced a better system.

I will now proceed to mention some of the peculiarities of the old system of landlord and tenant, which, in my opinion, have not been sufficiently regarded; and to the neglect of many of these, I am persuaded, much of the degradation of the country is to be charged. It will be found that there is as much difference between the old and the new connexion, as there is in the principles of union between the parents and children of two families, one of which is ruled mainly by parental love, and the other by the terrors of the rod.

The state of society in Ireland, down to the Reformation, was similar to that which is recollected to have survived in the Highlands of Scotland to the middle of the last

century; and which existed in England, in a modified form, until it was broken up, after the wars of York and Lancaster, by the general improvement of the country, and the introduction of a more profitable system of agriculture. It was clannish and patriarchal. Wherever this state of society has existed, the authority of the proprietors is purchased by conciliating the attachment of their followers; and they leave no art of popularity untried to secure it. They hold daily communication with their tenants, are condescending in their manners towards them; and, as they share each others' dangers as well as pleasures, sympathies and affections are awakened, to which the intercourse of refined life is a total stranger. "Wherever we moved," says Dr. Johnson, in speaking of the young Laird of Col, "we were pleased to see the reverence with which his subjects regarded him. He did not endeavour to dazzle them by any magnificence of dress; his only distinction was a feather in his bonnet; but as soon as he appeared, they forsook their work, and clustered around

him: he took them by the hand, and they were mutually delighted."

The author of some very curious "Letters from a Gentleman in the North of Scotland," written about the year 1730, gives some striking instances of the clan relation. "The meanest among them insist upon the privilege of taking the chief by the hand wherever they meet him; and I once saw a number of very discontented countenances, when a certain lord endeavoured to evade this ceremony. It was in presence of an English gentleman in high station, from whom he would willingly have concealed the knowledge of such seeming familiarity with slaves of so wretched appearance, and thinking it, I suppose, as a kind of contradiction to what he had often boasted at other times, *viz.*, his despotic power in his clan*." But although he cannot refuse them his hand, there is hardly anything he may not require of his people, if his authority be derived through a long line of ancestry. He may march them to destruction, he may change

* Letter xix.

their religion and their allegiance, and in many things he may rule them with a rod of iron*. Mrs. Grant somewhere mentions a fact respecting her own clan, that the chief had led them to an attack which they refused to face. When he got them home, he took them to church, and, in the face of a large congregation, assembled to witness their humiliation, ordered them to march round it three times; and in passing out at the door,

* One of them affirmed, before the author of the "Letters," at dinner before a good deal of company, English as well as Scots, that "if his estate was free from incumbrances, and were of his own, and he was then put to choose between that and the estate of the Duke of Newcastle, supposing it to be 30,000*l.* a year (as somebody said it was), he would make choice of the former, with the *following* belonging to it, before the other without it. Now his estate might be about 500*l.* a year." *Letter* xxi.—"At dinner, I expressed to M'Leod the joy which I had in seeing him on such cordial terms with his clan. 'Government (said he) has deprived us of our ancient power; but it cannot deprive us of our domestic satisfactions. I would rather drink punch in one of their houses (meaning the houses of his people) than be enabled by their hardships to have claret in my own.' All that he can get," adds Boswell, who was the son of a laird, "by raising his rents, is more luxury in his own house. Is it not better to share the profits of his estate, to a certain degree, with his kinsmen, and thus have both social intercourse and patriarchal influence?"—*Boswell's Tour to the Hebrides*, p. 253.

each of them was compelled to pull out his tongue and to say, "I am a poltroon."

Yet the rule of the chiefs could not have been generally galling, since we find their dependants clinging to them with undissembled affection, through good and through evil, supporting them in exile, as was the case of Lord Lovat, and manifesting their love and obedience, on the very first opportunity, by quitting his rich rival and joining the standard of their rightful lord. Those who have statute-law and parliaments to support them can rarely show the allegiance of more generations than the Highland chiefs; and it is remarked by General David Stewart, that "there has been a greater change of property within the last forty years of tranquillity, abundance, and wealth, than in the preceding two hundred years of feuds, rapine, and comparative poverty*."

Every body who has read this author's account of the Highland regiments, which displays an enthusiasm and chivalrous feeling worthy of the brave men he records,

* Sketches of the Highlanders, vol. i., p. 28.

and highly curious as exhibiting a state of society which made a nation happy without wealth, must be struck with the wonderful influence the lairds possessed over their retainers, even after their heritable jurisdictions were suppressed; and that oftentimes without estate, money, or any other means than those which flowed from attachment to their families, persons, and names, these gentlemen were enabled to raise from among their tenantry battalion upon battalion, until it seemed as if the whole population had rallied under their standards. It is related of the author himself, that, even so late as the year 1804, having to recruit for his majority, he raised among his countrymen, in less than three weeks, his contingent of 125 men, notwithstanding he offered no other bounty than the small one allowed by Government; and such was his popularity, in consequence of his sustaining the old Highland character, that he might have raised ten times as many, upon the same terms, had they been required, although they could have obtained twice the bounty from other persons.

Indeed, the extent to which this family recruiting was carried became an evil, inasmuch as the lairds and their relations, being rewarded by commissions and promotions in return for their services, carried their influence at last to unwarrantable lengths, and were guilty of gross injustice in order to make up their complement of men. As long as the Earls of Sutherland attempted to maintain their station in the country, by raising for the service of Government a "family regiment," every *tacksman* paid the bulk of his rent by the number of men he could raise, and his son or his kinsman was promoted in the Sutherland regiment, according to the number of recruits he furnished*. A redundant population was encouraged in order to supply the complement of men, and the chief never complained of the burden. As soon, however, as this mode of supplying the army ceased, the noble owner of this property took steps to reduce the number of the tenantry; and

* Account of the Improvements on the Marquess of Stafford's Estates in Sutherland, by James Loch, Esq., p. 47.

although it must be admitted that he acted with more generosity towards them than most other chiefs, and built them villages on the coast, and furnished them with nets and boats for fishing, and expended more money for their accommodation, than in his generation will be returned; still, it is impossible not to suspect that ultimate profit was the object, and that the plea of improving his people was only a secondary motive with him; but, as Hume justly remarks, "All methods of supporting populousness, except by the interest of the proprietors, are violent and ineffectual."

Such was the state of the Highlands long after the rebellion in 1745, when the heritable jurisdictions were abolished, and the clan system was broken up by severe enactments, in consequence of the political inconveniences which were experienced by the government at that period. It is nevertheless probable, that these legislative measures would have been of little avail, and that a hearty coalition of the two countries would hardly have taken place, if they had

not been seconded by the introduction of a new system of agriculture, which, holding out the prospects of profit by increased rents, seduced the lairds from their ancient attachments, and dissolved the strong tie they had upon their people.

The nature of these strong attachments deserves to be studied by those who would understand the proper relation between landlord and tenant. The Highlands presents in its system the extreme case on the one side of the abuse of the attachment of the tenant to his lord, while Ireland will furnish an example of an opposite kind in the entire alienation of the parties. If the effect of the clannish system was to make the economical virtues cheap, it raised the heroic virtues to the utmost pitch of perfection; and perhaps some persons will think it is not easy, in summing up the good that has resulted from the modern doctrines, to determine the actual gain which has accrued to society. To Ireland, it may confidently be asserted, the result has been fatal.

The Irish chieftains, although legally dis-

possessed of authority, continued, to the reign of James the First, and even after, to exercise sovereign rights. There was very little other law than the law of the strongest, kept in check by alliances among each other. The tenants held their lands on easy terms, and the rent was paid in kind; but more adequately by the defence they furnished to the lord, and the reprisals they made upon his enemies by a foray, or "lifting" cattle. The rent-roll was estimated in the number of able-bodied soldiers a chief could bring into the field, and not in money; and an Irish landlord, when he was asked what was the amount of his rent, might have answered, as a Highland chief once did, "Five hundred men." The same custom respecting foster-children was common to both countries, and is not altogether out of use in Ireland to this day.

The "Adventurers" and "Undertakers" of Elizabeth and James, and especially the Cromwellian settlers, went over totally unacquainted with the proprietary system of Ireland. They had been schooled in the

new doctrines, which were as opposite to the Irish arrangement as light to darkness. The changes which had taken place in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the relation between landlord and tenant, were as remarkable as anything which had happened in religion or commerce. Old things had passed away, and all things were become new. Agriculture was greatly improved; great investments had been made in land; money rents were paid more generally; and consequently the tenant was less dependent upon his landlord. About the time of James the First, a great number of works were published on the subject, and Dr. Johnson somewhere expresses his wonder where readers could have been found for them. Soon after, the clover and turnip systems of cultivation were introduced from Flanders, every species of stock became an object of attention, and farming implements were improved. Yet these improvements, while they benefited the pecuniary condition of the proprietors, seriously broke in upon their ancient aristocratic au-

thority; and the landlord and his tenantry were no longer one great family, succouring each other, but their interests became divided; land became more and more a subject of bargain, and the tenant looked for his protection more to the law of land and less to the lord. The only mode left to them of maintaining any authority among their tenantry was to let their land at a low rent, and on short terms;—a mode which continued in England unimpeached, until the political economists, aided by the increased profits of longer leases, induced the proprietors to part with their interest in their estates still further, and thus withdrew another coin from the ancient building.

The settlers in Ireland, subsequently to the Reformation, and especially the Cromwellians, by introducing these new doctrines into the country, certainly alienated the tenantry still further from them. All former settlers had found it their interest to adopt the system of the country, and fall in with the established customs of the people. It was the misfortune of the Cromwellians to

go thither with a new religion, new politics, a new system of agriculture, and a new relation between landlord and tenant, subversive of everything which existed, from the highest to the lowest human being. They carried with them neither attachments, sympathies, social ties, or patrimonial influence. All they could do was by the strong arm of the law, and this was weak. Rents which had been paid willingly to despotic chiefs, were withheld from republican landlords; and contracts, which were binding, under the old system, by being made over a stick or a straw, could not be enforced, under the new, by the most solemn executions of written instruments. Like other untutored nations, they scorned to be held bound by a *sheep's-skin*.

It is worth while to remark that the vices of this state of society are always attended by virtues, which shrink into small dimensions under a system of vigilant law, and an appeal to legal tribunals in support of rights. Loyalty, conjugal fidelity, domestic affection, generosity, hospitality, honesty to-

wards each other, a scrupulous regard to the keeping of promises, chivalrous bravery, and a high sense of honour, are some of the traits of character which distinguish the clan system. Dr. Johnson says, of the waiting-maid at Anoch, "We knew that the girls of the Highlands are all gentlewomen, and treated her with great respect, which she received as customary and due, and was neither elated by it nor confused." Dr. M'Culloch, in speaking of St. Kildare, remarks, "Each house has a door with a lock and key—*a luxury quite unknown in other parts of the Highlands.*" "My father," says General Stewart, "still adhering to old customs, does not lock his doors to this day." A statement not dissimilar might be justly made of the remoter parts of Ireland, and even of those where personal violence and aggression are most conspicuous. In some countries, the offences of which the people are guilty, are offences against the person; in others, they are against property. It seldom or ever happens that both descriptions of crime are prevalent to-

gether in the same place, and they belong to different stages of the same society. In the department of the Seine, ninety criminals out of a hundred were in the year 1825 prosecuted for offences against property; whereas, in Corsica, no fewer than seventy-six out of a hundred were charged with crimes against the person. Yet, in the department of the Seine, at the same period, the proportion of illegitimate children to legitimate was rather more than half, while in Corsica it was as one to thirty-four. The average number of executions for murder in England has not for many years exceeded a dozen; while theft, and pilfering, and fraud, and felonious abstraction, are unbounded. It is a reflection, not very flattering to the dignity of literature and science, that the two departments of Corrèze and Creuse in France, which may be considered as very much behind the rest in civilization, are distinguished as presenting the smallest relative amount of crimes in each year. I may also add, that whatever pecuniary advantages have been derived to

the Highlands by increased civilization, the improvement in morals has not been so conspicuous. One thousand men of Sutherlandshire were embodied four and five years together, at different and distant periods, *without an instance of military punishment.* On general parades for punishment, the Sutherland Highlanders have been ordered to their quarters, "as examples of this kind were not necessary for such honourable soldiers*." Under the improved system, several associations for the prosecution of felony have been formed by the stock-farmers of the county; indigence has increased while charity is more confined, and the females are not improved in the virtues which most adorn the sex.

The position in which the Irish proprietary have been placed, has induced them to look upon land as the merchant does upon his wares; and to forego, for the sake of profit, all the personal influence and consequence usually incident to their station.

* Stewart's Account of the Highland Regiments, vol. i., p. 165.

The rank and importance of the chief of a clan, and feudal lord, and even of the English proprietor, are derived in a great measure from the acts of kindness they are enabled to extend towards their tenantry, who are dependent upon them for subsistence and protection, and for which they receive in return not only money, but honour, family attachment, military service, and political support. The remission of rent, assistance in distress, the adjustment of disputes, and friendly advice, are the necessary result of the connexion of the two parties. If an Irish landlord is lenient towards his tenantry, the kindness is gratuitous, or is conceded as a charity, and consequently is not very general; but in England, even at present, and more so under the old landlords, the remission of rent in particular exigencies, and other proprietary kindnesses, are not conceded or accepted as acts of charity, but are yielded by the landlord, and expected by the tenant, on an understanding, hardly amounting to a right, yet not far short of it; because every landlord, placed in the like

circumstances, would do the same. In Ireland, any kindness which is shewn to the tenantry, depends upon the generosity of the individual, and not upon any general feeling which prevails among the class. There are many liberal landlords in the country; but still, as a class, they are needy, exacting, unremitting, harsh, and without sympathy for their tenants.

Almost every proprietor in Ireland, as I said before, is a trader in his commodity. He has never been in a situation to command opinions, or to feel the consequence this position imparts to the possessor, and therefore treats his land simply as an article of profit. Hence he resorts to methods of letting which are ruinous to the tenant, and in the end will be ruinous to himself. He lets by auction and tender, and encourages secret biddings; and as competitors have never been wanting in a country where the occupation of land furnishes the only employment, and the population presses so hard upon subsistence, he has never felt much restraint upon his cupidity. The

necessity of holding land has existed to so great a degree, that the rent which the land would not pay has been derived from other sources, such as an illegal still, a little home-made linen, and by the earnings of labour from the landlord at a low price, and sometimes by savings acquired in England. Many proprietors have been known, and, indeed, they but thinly disguise their intentions, to favour smuggling, that they might obtain better rents.

As profit was the sole object, the proprietors had no inducement to make sacrifices, and accept moderate rents, to secure the good opinion of their tenants. The land, not being patrimonial, did not descend to them accompanied with those feelings which distinguish the aristocracy of other countries. There was no pride of ancestry, no exercise of despotic sway over the lives and opinions of the "following," which, under the ancient relation, had greater charms than money itself; nor did the land descend to them, like an English estate, clothing the proprietor with rank and political importance.

The aristocratic influence of the English proprietors is in its nature personal, and is still maintained by leasing their lands on moderate terms, by remitting part of the rent on particular emergencies, and by permitting the tenant to feel that he and his family have an interest beyond his legal estate by a tacit compact of honour more binding than the law. Even long leases may be granted without losing the influence, where the landlord acts in this spirit; but it may be observed, on the other hand, that when the landlord exacts the highest rents, and leaves nothing to his tenantry but their subsistence, neither wealth, rank, nor title, will give him much power. He may, indeed, command their votes, but he cannot control their opinions; and these in the present day, silently operating at home, in company, and at market, will be more than a match for the landlord either at court or in the legislature. If the proprietary of England mean to retain their hold upon the country, and influence opinions as well as votes, let them study the condition of Ireland; and I am

much mistaken if they do not awaken from the dreams of profit they have indulged in, and retrace many of the steps which this fallacious guide has tempted them to take. "The commodiousness of money," says Dr. Johnson in his Tour, speaking of the same subject, "is indeed great; but there are some advantages which money cannot buy, and which, therefore, no wise man will, by the love of money, be tempted to forego." As the world does not willingly withhold its admiration from wealth and greatness, even though they should be attended by vice and folly, we may safely conclude, wherever we find them degraded, that it is because these accidents of station have lost the essential qualities which connect them with the interests of the inferior classes, or they are deprived of the charms which impose upon their imaginations. One of the greatest mistakes of which the gentry of England were ever guilty has been committed within the present century, when they have indulged in a profuse expenditure in cities, vieing with the mercantile and money-getting class

in the splendour of their equipages and of their drawing-rooms, which they have been foolishly ambitious of filling with crowds of town acquaintance, upon whom they have no tie, and from whom they can expect nothing but the ordinary courtesies of life. Had they gone upon the opposite tack, and upheld their dignity in the country by surrounding themselves with their neighbours and respectable tenantry, and have endeavoured to derive their consequence and influence through them, they would have found themselves possessing greater weight in society, and less exposed to the reverses of fortune.

An estate has been regarded in Ireland as a money interest alone, and has therefore given the proprietors scarcely any more consequence than exchequer-bills or stock, which would have yielded the same amount of income. A country, where the mercantile class prevails, among whom all the transactions of life are conducted upon the principle of a market price, may perhaps establish the same relation between landlord and te-

nant where the soil is the object, as between the same parties where houses in towns are concerned; but in a country purely agricultural, and a peasantry among whom the old social feelings are perpetuated, it is impossible to break up the old relation and establish a new one, founded upon pecuniary considerations alone, without doing great violence to society. It is not a relationship of blood, it is true, but it is one of interest, of strong sympathy, and of nature; and if long standing amongst the habits of mankind be anything in the scale, it has a preponderance that no system of the economists can claim. Modern doctrines, indeed, impeach its wisdom, and would supersede its necessity; but Ireland furnishes an example of the opposite system, and holds out her beacon to warn the political innovator, in his uncharted ocean, not to venture near the rock on which she has been wrecked.

In every country in Europe, excepting Ireland, the landlord finds something for the tenant besides the mere soil; and even in England, which is a country where very

little is furnished, the proprietor builds and repairs such accommodations as are necessary to conduct the business of the farm. In many continental kingdoms he finds the stock, but in unfortunate Ireland the tenant has been left to provide even his own hovel; and hence it is the worst possible, and without the most ordinary conveniences of barns, stables, or even sheds or yards. Adam Smith remarks, that those laws and customs which secure to the English yeomanry a beneficial interest in the improvements they make, "have contributed more to the present grandeur of England than all their boasted regulations of commerce taken together."

Wherever the mercantile principles prevail, they seem to insinuate themselves into all the ramifications of life, much beyond what is intended by those who adopt them. It is to this spirit I would attribute the breaking up of the old relation between landlord and tenant, and between master and servant, and the introduction of a new one, which is founded on money considera-

tions alone. The modern doctrine exacts everything, even menial duties, according to contract; and neither party thinks it safe to leave anything to be performed from a sense of duty, or the impulse of generous feeling; but it would have contributed to the happiness of families, if masters had taken care to preserve more of the spirit of the ancient connexion, while they regulated it by acts of parliament.

The gentry of Ireland are reaping the harvest they have sowed. They sowed the wind, and they are reaping the whirlwind. Their mansions are seen dilapidated and deserted throughout the country, their lands abused, their tenantry alienated by exactions, and made vindictive by oppression, their estates involved in litigation, impounded in chancery, charged with incumbrances, and rendered unsafe to purchase by irremediable flaws of title. No longer propped up by their own corrupt parliament, nor able to repair their ruined fortunes by truckling to power, as landlords they are daily losing their ground in society, which

is seized upon by their enemies, whose strength increases in proportion to their weakness. While I was among them, the proprietors were not backward to taunt the government of England with abandoning the loyal part of the nation, and to bewail the low estate to which they were fallen; but it would comport more with their interest, and I am sure it would with their magnanimity, to defer to the judgment of those who are less prejudiced, and to win back the favour they have lost by doing acts of justice to themselves.

There is yet in Ireland one species of landlord who has found it his interest to cultivate the favour of his dependants, and to attach them to his person; but, unhappily, it has been for the worst of purposes—to set the law at defiance, and to defeat the processes of the sheriff. Nothing more intolerable can be well conceived, than that men who rank high in the state, bear the honours of the crown, and inherit, under provident management, ample fortunes, should at the present day have it in

their power clandestinely to compound for their liberty, and the enjoyment of their property, and set at defiance the execution of the law when an attempt is made to enforce it against them. Fortunately for the country, this disreputable class of proprietors is upon the wane; and the motive of cultivating the favour of the tenantry, for such purposes, is confined to a few individuals*.

* On the examination of Mr. Roger O'Sullivan, the under-sheriff of Kerry, by the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the administration of justice in Ireland in 1826, he was asked, "During the year 1823, did it happen that writs against the goods of Colonel Crosbie were frequently lodged in your office?"—"Yes, writs were lodged against his goods."—"Are you able to state whether, during that year, that gentleman was possessed of an establishment in the county of Kerry, and of what description it was?"—"He was possessed of an establishment in a large castle, which was situated in a demesne surrounded with a high wall, where no good could be done by a sheriff."—"Was he possessed of a stock in cattle, or other personal property than the furniture of his house?"—"I don't know; I don't recollect ever seeing anything except deer."—"Have you been enabled to execute in that year any writs against the goods of Colonel Crosbie?"—"I have not, nor has any sheriff been able to do so for the last seven or eight years, to my knowledge."—"Be so good as to state what exertions you have made during that year, at any time, to execute any writs?"—"Whenever a writ was delivered to me against him, I offered the person delivering it to go with him, but no man ever went with me; I have gone there frequently,

A noble lord, who has many thousand acres in the county of Galway, covered with cot-

and taken a man with me, but I never could succeed. Persons are not fond of accompanying the sheriff to show goods of Colonel Crosbie's, as conceiving they would be endangered by so doing."—" Are there many individuals residing in the county of Kerry, against whose persons or goods writs have been lodged in your hands, either in the years 1823 or 1825, which writs have failed to be executed; and amongst those, are there any magistrates?"—" There are some individuals so circumstanced, and amongst them there are some, but not many, magistrates."—" Have you, from any of the individuals circumstanced as described, received any consideration or promise for not executing the writs?"—" I must decline answering that question."

John Cuthbert, Esq., under-sheriff of the county of Limerick. " Are there many persons in the county of Limerick, possessing property and in the rank of gentlemen, against whom writs have been lodged with you from time to time, but who have been enabled to avoid arrest?"—" There are many in the rank of gentlemen, who are reputed to have property; but the property may be in the hands of other persons, and most generally is."—To another question—" There are considerably more than twenty, and amongst those there are seven or eight magistrates."—To another of the same nature, " I consider, the majority."—" Do such persons appear in public in the county?"—" They do sometimes; but, by means of their influence with the lower classes of the people, they always avoid coming in contact with the sheriff or his officers, by getting intimation of his approach." —" Is the execution of process attended with much difficulty; and if so, from what causes does the difficulty arise?" —" It is attended with very considerable difficulty; the cause is the disposition of the people to resist the execution of the laws, and the influence those in debt have over the peasantry."

R. M.

tier tenants and small farmers, who is greatly embarrassed, and is obliged to compound

R. M. Duckett, Esq., under-sheriff of the county of Tipperary, being asked, "Was there any actual or understood agreement for an *annual* composition with Lord Llandaff, or with any person on his behalf, in consideration of general forbearance or accommodation?"—"Not that I ever knew of; I was told that I would not be treated worse than my predecessors."—"State what was the greatest amount of gratuity which you recollect to have received in any one case?"—"In the year 1819, after the expiration of my first year of office, Lord Llandaff appointed to meet me at Thomas-Town, for the purpose of settling his account on foot of several executions which had been in my hands against him; I attended him accordingly, and his account was settled in the presence of his law-agent and his land-agent, and it was ascertained I was in advance for his lordship about 1500*l.* Lord L. then voluntarily directed a bond to be prepared for his execution to me, for, I think, about 3129*l.*; of this sum I have received 2000*l.*, which would leave about 500*l.* for my fees; and I have for that 2000*l.* satisfied the judgment."

Mr. James Goggan, under-sheriff of Meath, from the year 1804 to 1826, and acting under a deed of deputation from the several high-sheriffs, being asked, "Are there many persons, having known residences in the county of Meath, against whom writs have been lodged in the sheriff's office, but not executed?" replied—"There are some; I can reckon six at this moment."—"Do you believe that any person employed by the sheriff derives any emolument, or occasional gratuity, from any of those persons?"—"There has been some gratuity at different times paid to me by two of them."—"Have those gratuities been paid periodically for any length of time?"—"There have been sums occasionally received from one of them since 1809; the other has com-

for the safety of his property, by paying accommodation-money, is yet extremely

menced lately."—"Should we be right in understanding that both or either of the two persons particularly alluded to, agreed to pay a sum of money annually or otherwise, on the condition that they should be apprized when any process was lodged against them in the sheriff's office?"—"One of them gave a sum to be so informed for this year; the other purposed to pay 10*l.* a year, and gave bills for it, some of which were not paid; but occasionally he has paid fees."—"To whose use were the gratuities appropriated?"—"To Mr. Smith's," (the former under-sheriff,) "until January, 1823, and to mine since."—"In those cases where you received poundage on giving notice of the writs to the defendants, did you make returns of *nulla bona* and *non est inventus?*"—"I did."

Usher Beere, Esq., sub-sheriff of Tipperary in 1827, being asked what arrangement he had made with the high-sheriff when he took office, replied, "I received the whole of the emoluments," (netting 1000*l.* for the year,) "and I defrayed the expenses of the office; I purchased a carriage for the high-sheriff, and I paid the expense of breakfasts at the assizes; but there was no arrangement made as to all this, the entire being understood. I took the office at the solicitation of the high-sheriff shortly before his being appointed, and not from any application of my own." To a question as to what his fees and accommodation amounted to with Lord Llandaff, he said, "I think I got about 700*l.* or 800*l.* in that year, on foot of fees and accommodation, from his lordship."

John Carson, Esq., under-sheriff of the county of Roscommon, being asked, "Have you had occasion to attempt to levy where there was apparently a sufficient property, which you have found, on inquiry or otherwise, was covered

lenient to his tenantry, is unwilling to oppress or distress them when they fall into arrear in consequence of a bad season, and instructs his agent to take the rents, or any part of them, in any manner, and at any time, the tenants can pay them. In the year 1818, and subsequently, there never was a less arrear than 10,000*l.* or 12,000*l.* upon his Galway estates. It is a remarkable fact, which furnishes a clue to the causes of the disorganized state of society, that some of the greatest spendthrifts, in spite of the drawbacks to their reputation, have

by conveyance from the defendant?"—"I have attempted in some instances, and have been defeated by conveyances to other persons."—"Can you state any particular instances where claims on executions of magnitude have been so prevented?"—"In the case of Lord Dillon and Mr. Daniel Ferrall, and others which I cannot at present enumerate."—"Are there many persons at present known to you to reside in the county of Roscommon, against whose persons you have writs in your hands, which you have not been able to execute?"—"I don't think there are more than four or five such persons."—"What class of life are those persons in?"—"They are respectable individuals residing with their families, who have persons generally watching to prevent the admission of strangers into their premises."—"How long have those individuals been able to evade the law?"—"To my knowledge, for the last six or seven years."

been enabled to use the power they have acquired over their tenantry by kind conduct, to advance their political interests in the country.

The Irish gentry have been spoilt by indulgence. The Government has always been ready to help them on every emergency, and they have never been taught to rely upon themselves. Incredible sums have been expended, amounting to more than the whole revenue of the country, in harbours, barracks, roads, fisheries, and public works, to indulge their humour. Whenever an insurrection has happened, although it may have grown out of exactions for tithe or rent, away went an army to suppress it; and the effect has been to make the clergy and landlords more rigid in their demands, and less inclined to rely upon the ordinary means of yielding something in one case, and remitting in another, which is the general practice of mankind when they have not force to support their exactions. Whatever influence is lost by the gentry, is acquired

by the priests. They are becoming the lords paramount in politics as well as religion; and it will be well for Ireland if, in the circulation of property, some of it should settle down in a Catholic proprietary to counteract the clerical spirit.

Rack-renting is made a source of complaint ever since the settlement. Scarcely a page of Swift can be opened on Irish affairs, but he inveighs against it; and every author who has written upon the subject since, speaks of it as a great grievance.

It cannot be expected that landlords situated like those of Ireland will refrain from accepting the rent that is voluntarily offered, nor do I mean to impute corrupt motives to them for so doing. The tenantry, pressed upon by their necessities, and living upon the contingency of seasons, are willing enough to hope for the best. If one does not give the rent demanded, another will; and as the question with them is not one of profit and accumulation, but of ex-

istence, they are induced to take land at a price which leaves them nothing but the potatoe to subsist on. All the rest goes to the landlord, who would not even leave them this scanty pittance, if he could get his land tilled without. The Scotch landlords did much the same, and sacrificed into the bargain all the kindly and generous attachments which they inherited with the land. The Irish landlords have at least the excuse of their example being upheld by those who were neither poor nor ignorant.

The presentments of grand juries are a striking illustration of the relation that subsists between the landlord and tenant. The landlord obtains the presentment of a road to be made, oftentimes upon this principle, "Give me this presentment, and I will give you the one to follow." His tenantry are employed upon the work, and the landlord receives the money from the treasurer of the county. It is like paying the wages of a particular farm out of the general fund of the parish, as sometimes happens in

England; only in Ireland, no money passes to the labourer, but goes to the reduction of what he owes for rent.

In cases where the intermediate landlords do not exist, other evils have crept in, which have created great abuses. Those who have retained the fee of their estates have, to a vast extent, granted leases for lives of small portions of land, in order to make freeholders. Politics are the bane of Ireland. The Irish government, in order to attach the proprietors to them, were in the habit of distributing divers bounties among them, in the shape of places and preferments, civil and ecclesiastical; and laid out incalculable sums of money upon the plea of improving the condition of the country, but really to increase their influence. It has been said that everything in Ireland resolves itself into a "job." Now, in order to benefit by any "job," it is necessary to possess political influence, and the forty-shilling freeholders were created to obtain it. For a while the landlords drove them to the hus-

tings like cattle to a fair; but as the tie between the proprietors and the tenantry was weak, the priests took advantage of this circumstance, and soon turned it to their own ends. Like the Highland chiefs, as long as the Irish landlords could use the population to advance their own interests, and strengthen themselves with Government, they were willing to encourage a petty tenantry, and bear all the inconvenience resulting from them, regarding it as a tax they paid for their rank; but as soon as they found their own weapons turned against themselves, they took a new view of the subject, and, upon the plea of improving the condition of the country, began to take steps to rid themselves of the redundant population. The towns have complained for some time that unusual numbers of poor have been driven in upon them, who have no employment to give; while another portion of the ejected tenantry have been compelled to accept of the smallest pittance of land from such landlords as were more needy, or who had not fallen into the same views. But the degra-

dation of the little tenantry has even gone further; for, either to continue in their present holding, or to obtain a new one, they have been tempted to deny themselves still more of the produce of the land, that they might give it to the landlord; and hence they have resorted to the wretched expedient of growing an inferior and coarser potatoe, which yields larger crops, and is produced, with less manure, upon a worse soil. That this deteriorated potatoe, called "lumpers," is extending in cultivation, and becoming more the food of the poor, is a fact which cannot be doubted, frightful as it is, and speaks volumes as to their sinking condition:

> "And in the lowest deep a lower deep,
> To which the hell they suffer seems a heaven."

A competent witness says of these potatoes, "they are little better in substance than a turnip."

The Sub-letting Act, useful in many respects, has assisted in the operation of "clearing;" and the disfranchisement of the

forty-shilling freeholders has confirmed the landlords in their previously existing notions of the benefits to be derived from it; unless, indeed, the large rents obtained by the cottier system, and the depressed state of agriculture, should induce them to change their present practice. The case of the Irish landlords is so parallel to that which existed on the estate of the Marquis of Stafford, in Sutherland, that I cannot forbear introducing the views which he took of his interests, as represented by his chief agent. There, indeed, the surplus population was encouraged to recruit a regiment; here, it has been to raise rents, and make freeholders. Among other reasons for removing the little tenantry, Mr. Loch urges the following:—

"So long as men, for recruiting the Sutherland regiment, were the great object of consideration, the chief had no reason, nor did he complain of this arrangement. It was one of those taxes he laid his account with paying, in order to maintain and support that system from which he derived part

of his consequence and influence. When, however, this regiment, like every other corps of the same description, was made a regiment of the line, and became subject to every regulation applicable to the rest of the King's army, a complete alteration took place in its whole character and economy. It was no longer commanded by the chief, or by any person nominated by him; the officers were no longer of his selection, nor was it now permitted to remain the instrument of private influence, in forming part of the public defence. It was certainly desirable, therefore, that a system"—that is, the Highland system of cultivation—"should not be continued, which was so ruinous in itself, while the only benefits which were ever derived from its continuance, were entirely done away with*."

The habits of the intermediate landlords—the tacksmen—are represented to have been of just the same character as those in Ireland. They exacted from their sub-

* Account of the Improvements on Lord Stafford's Estates, by James Loch, Esq. p. 56.

tenants services which were of the most oppressive nature, and to such an extent, that, if they managed well, they might hold what they retained in their own occupation rent-free. This saved them from a life of labour and exertion. The whole economy of their farm, securing their fuel, gathering their harvest, and grinding their corn, was performed by their immediate dependants *.

The consolidation of farms, and the consequent removal of the little tenants, took place in England during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; after the close of the wars of the two Roses, and when the country enjoyed the blessings of internal peace. The great proprietors at this time, made poor by the previous hostilities, were very desirous of profiting by the improved times, and obtained from the king a greater power of alienating their property by what the lawyers call fines. The act of this reign, which facilitates the use of them, gave a greater security to purchasers, and encouraged them

* Account of the Improvements on Lord Stafford's Estate, by James Loch, Esq., p. 48.

to buy, and barred all hostile claims, after the expiration of five years; the improvements in commerce multiplying the means of purchase, and inviting greater investments of capital in land. Then commenced that great change in agricultural history—the conversion of tillage into pasture. In the year 1487, we find the legislature complaining of the destruction of the towns and villages in the Isle of Wight, which at this period were, without doubt, what are called "townships" or "villages" in Scotland and Ireland; that the fields were fenced and made pasture; and that, in consequence of the consolidation of farms, the people were decayed: for remedy of this mischief, none was allowed to take more farms than one exceeding ten marks' rent*. Another legislative measure of the same year recites, that "The king remembereth that great inconveniences daily do increase by desolation, and pulling down, and wilful waste of houses and townes, within this realm, laying to pasture lands, which customably have been used in tillage,

* 4 Hen. VII., c. 16.

whereby idlenesse, which is the ground and beginning of all mischief, daily doth increase. For where in some townes two hundred persons were occupied, and lived by their lawful labours, now there are occupied two or three herdesmen, and the residue fall into idlenesse, &c.," and enacts, that all owners of houses with twenty acres of land, shall maintain the houses and buildings necessary for tillage*. Again, in 1514-15†, the same complaint is made of converting tillage into pasture; and in 1521, Henry the Eighth endeavoured to stop the supposed evil by directing commissions to the magistrates for putting the laws against it in force. Still these were not sufficient to counteract the interest of the land owners, for by an act passed in 1535, the king was to take half the profits of the lands so converted, until the owner had built a house, and restored the lands to their former tillage condition‡. The accu-

* 4 Hen. VII., c. 19.

† 6 Hen. VIII., c. 5., 7 Hen. VIII., c. 1.

‡ 27 Hen. VIII., c. 22. See also 26 Hen. VIII., c. 8 and 9; 27 Hen. VIII., c. 1; 32 Hen VIII., c. 18 and 19; 33 Hen. VIII., c. 36; 38 Hen. VIII., c. 4.

mulation of sheep in few hands is also made the subject of complaint about this time, some having 10,000, 20,000, and 24,000, which is attributed to the great profit attending them. A sheep which had sold, before the change, at two shillings and fourpence, was then sold at six shillings; for remedy, no man shall have more than 2000 sheep, nor take above two farms, and not two unless he reside. The great rise in sheep was therefore not from a scarcity, for they were multiplied prodigiously, but from the altered value of the precious metals.

Latimer, in his sermons, ascribes the increase of the price of provisions to landlords raising their rents. "Whence," says he, "commeth this monstrous and portentous dearth made by man, notwithstanding God doth send us plentifully the fruites of the earth mercifully, contrary to our desertes, notwithstanding the much which these rich men have, causeth such dearth, that poor men, which live of their labour, cannot, with the sweate of their face, have a liveing, all kind of victuals is so deare, pigges, geese,

capons, chickens, egges, &c., these things with others are so unreasonably enhaunced*." In a passage often quoted, he states that the farm his father held at three pounds or four pounds a year, and which had a walk for a hundred sheep, and thirty milch cows, was in his time let for sixteen pounds a year or more †.

"Then all kind of victual," says one of the speakers, in the curious Dialogue between a Husbandman, Knight, Merchant, Capper, and Doctor of Divinity ‡, "are as dear or dearer agayne, and no cause of God's part thereof, as far as I can perceive, for I never saw more plenty of corn, grass, and cattle of all sort, than we have at this present, and have had as ye know all these xx years passed continually, thanked be Lord God!"—"It is scarcity of things which commonly maketh dearth: this is a marvellous dearth, that in such plenty cometh

* Sermons, p. 31. † Ibid. p. 32.

‡ A Compendious or Brief Examination of certayne ordinary Complayntes of divers of our Countrymen in these our dayes; which, although they are in some part unjust and frivolous, yet are they all by way of Dialogues thoroughly debated and discussed by W. S., Gent, 4to. London, 1581, Reprinted in 1741.

contrary to his kind." The Husbandman accuses the Knight, and the Knight the Husbandman, that he is the cause he cannot live. One lays it to the rise in rents, the other, that he must buy so dear corn, cattle, geese, pigs, &c. "Cannot you remember," says the Knight, "that in this town, within these xxx years, I could buy the best pig or goose for 4*d.*, which now costeth 12*d.*, a chicken for 1*d.*, a hen for 2*d.*, which now costeth me double and treble the money?"

It appears, that instead of one or two hundred persons that had their living from tillaging a farm, there were then three or four shepherds, and the master only, who obtained a living therefrom.

The protector, Somerset, favoured the poor. A commission was issued to inquire of inclosures and farms, and whether those who had purchased the abbey-lands kept hospitality. The lords carried an act for imparking grounds, but it was cast out by the commons; "yet, gentlemen went on every where," says Burnett, "taking their lands into their own hands, and inclosing

them." In 1549, the inclosure of commons and the conversion of tillage lands into pasture created so much uneasiness, that Edward the Sixth endeavoured to check the evil complained of by a proclamation, desiring that all late inclosures might be laid open. "One ill effect of the dissoluteness of the people broke out this summer (1549)," says Burnett, "occasioned by the inclosing of lands. While the monasteries stood, there were great numbers of people maintained about these houses; their lands were easily let out, and many were relieved by them. But now, the number of people increased much, marriage being universally allowed: they also had more time than formerly, by the abrogation of many holydays, and the putting down of processions and pilgrimages; so that as the numbers increased, they had more time than they knew how to bestow. Those who bought in the church-lands, as they everywhere raised their rents, of which old Latimer made great complaints in one of his court sermons, so they resolved to inclose their grounds, and turn them to

pasture; for trade was then rising fast, and corn brought not in so much money as wool did. Their flocks also being kept by few persons in grounds so inclosed, the landlords themselves enjoyed the profit which formerly the tenants made out of their estates; and so they intended to force them to serve about them at any such rates as they would allow*."

The insurrections of this period are to be attributed to these changes in agriculture, though they terminated in religious broils. "I think it to be the most occasion of these wild and unhappy uproars," says the Doctor of Divinity in the Dialogue, "that hath been among us, for by reason of these inclosures many subjects have no ground to live upon, as they had before time, and occupations be not always set a worke all alike, and therefore the people still increasing, and their livings diminishing, it must needs come to pass, that a great part of the people shall be idle, and lack living. For

* Burnett's History of the Reformation, vol. ii., p. 113.

hunger is a bitter thing to bear; wherefore they must needs, when they lack, murmur against them that have plenty, and so stir these tumults." The Doctor, who is the oracle of the "Dialogue," lays the dearth to the depreciation in the coin.

All the measures adopted in previous reigns for keeping land in tillage had failed; and, therefore, in 1597, the statutes made against the destruction of towns and houses of husbandry were repealed, and another attempt was made by a new statute*, which again enforced the conversion of pasture into tillage; but it was all in vain, since the interest of the proprietors was unanimously opposed to it. From the frequency of these laws, Mr. Hume naturally infers that they could not be executed.

The "clearing," in this case, as in all others, threw great numbers out of their bread, and caused the utmost distress throughout the country. One of the speakers in the "Dialogue," exclaims "Yea!

* 39 Eliz., c. 1 and 2.

those sheepe is the cause of all these mischieves, for they have driven husbandry out of the country, by the which was increased before all kinds of victuals, and now altogether sheepe, sheepe, sheepe!" "When an unsatiable wretch," says Sir Thomas More, "who is a plague to his country, resolves to inclose many thousand acres of ground, the owners, as well as tenants, are turned out of their possessions, by tricks, or by main force, or being wearied out with ill-usage, they are forced to sell them. By which means those miserable people, both men and women, married and unmarried, old and young, with their poor but numerous families, are all forced to change their seats, not knowing whither to go*."

The same policy, which led to the destruction of the *cottier* system of husbandry, favoured enclosures, while the investment of capital in sheep and cattle, led on gradually to a better system of tillage, and the creation

* Utopia, dated 1516.

of a new class in society—labourers in husbandry. Tusser, who published in 1557, devotes one of his rhyming chapters to a comparison between "Champion country and Several," in which the advantages of the latter are made to appear:

> "More plenty of mutton and beef,
> Corn, butter, and cheese of the best,
> More wealth any where, to be brief,
> More people, more handsome and prest,
> Where find ye? (go search any coast)
> Than these where inclosure is most."

The statute of *Elizabeth* against the erecting and maintaining of cottages*, would lead me to infer, that the poor ejected tenants struggled hard against their fate, setting themselves down upon the property of needy owners, who were willing to make a profit of their necessities, or upon any piece of waste or unclaimed ground, where they might erect a cabin for their shelter. I think this is confirmed by the numerous exceptions which are made in favour of cottages built under other circumstances, and

* 31 Eliz., c. 7.

by the clause which forbids more than one family to abide in one cottage.

One of the most remarkable consequences which resulted from this change in agriculture, was, that it favoured, more than almost any other circumstance, the introduction of poor-laws. It threw at once vast numbers of people out of a living; and as we find from the statutes passed against vagabonds, multiplied this lawless race. If there were any justification needed for throwing such a burden upon the land, it might be found in the necessity of the case, and in the injustice which the proprietors were practising upon their tenants, by ejecting them from their livelihood.

The change of tillage land into pasture did not, however, long continue; for we find the investment of capital in land soon led the farmers to introduce a better system of tillage. During the seventeenth century great progress was made; clover, and afterwards turnips, were introduced, and during the Protectorate, it was as fashionable to be an agriculturist as it has been in our own

generation. To sum up the evidence we have collected on the Highland and English changes in cultivation, it amounts to this, that the *cottier* system of cultivation has been followed in each case by the establishment of a great extent of pasture, and that the progress from this is to an improved system of tillage husbandry; and, moreover, that the conversion of the earliest mode of tillage by cotters into pasture assisted materially in driving the legislature into a compulsory assessment for the poor. The impolitic laws of Henry the Eighth and of Elizabeth, for promoting tillage, were wholly repealed by the 21 *Jac.*, *c.* 2.

It is yet problematical how far the Irish landlords will follow up their present disposition to clear, because there is little doubt such a measure would, in most cases, lessen their rents; although a similar measure was found to increase them, both in Scotland and England;—unless, indeed, the extreme subdivision of land should be already so great, by the multiplication of the people, that the quantity occupied affords no

more than bare subsistence to the tenant. In that case, the landlord in his own defence will clear his land. If he should, the cup of bitterness for Ireland is yet to be drained; for a people "meted out and trodden under foot, scattered and peeled," as they already are, and so habituated to personal violence, will not be restrained from committing outrages on such as they conceive to be the authors of their misery.* Rather than any

* "The existing state of things is truly frightful; when tenantry (the under-tenants of under-tenants) are dispossessed, after a season of patient suffering, they go into some other district, perhaps a peaceable one; there they fail not to find friends, clansmen and fellow factionaries, whom they bring back with them by night to avenge their cause; it is avenged in blood; and, where occasion offers, the service is repaid in kind. Thus the whole country is set in flames. This will be quite intelligible to those who know the system of mutual understanding that pervades the districts, I may say, of each province. I will mention one instance that came within my own knowledge. I beg, however, not to mention the part of Ireland in which it occurred. It was the case of a dispossessed tenantry of an estate. They were certainly surreptitious; they had also not paid their rent. They were, at length, suddenly and simultaneously dispossessed; they were in the most deplorable state, without house, without food, without money; starving, and almost dying, in the ditches. I ventured to predict that if they were not in some way relieved, the consequences in the winter would be dreadful. And so they were. They brought their friends, just in the way I have been describing, from other districts.

such evil consequences should take place, the legislature must imitate the policy of Elizabeth's reign, and introduce poor-laws, or an emigration-law,—or anything.

It is a prevalent opinion that the improvement of Ireland advances rapidly. This is true as regards the situation of the professions, and the commercial and trading interests; but as regards the great bulk of the population, including all those who derive their immediate subsistence from land, it is not correct. The peasant is now what he was in the days of Swift—scantily clad, wretchedly housed, miserably fed, and grievously rack-rented. His clothing is still the frieze coat, and the negative articles of his wardrobe are as large as at that time; his house is still a hovel, with the improvement, perhaps, of a chimney; the quantity of land he can command is dwindled down

Blood followed! afterwards, prosecutions, convictions, executions!!"—*The Bishop of Limerick, First Emigration Report*, 1826, p. 144. For other instances, see the Report *passim*, particularly Mr. Gabett's evidence, p. 126, and Mr. Nimmo's, p. 194; also General Bourke's evidence in "Third Report on the State of Ireland," p. 313, relative to Lord Stradbroke's estate.

to the most scanty area; and his food, which was formerly beef and corn, is now a root deteriorated to a bulkiness and coarseness suited only for cattle. Arthur Young repeatedly observes, that the condition of the peasantry, when he saw them, was worse than it had been twenty years before.

Of the hacknied subject of population, I will say but little; yet I cannot wholly avoid it, because it presents a formidable obstacle to the right adjustment of the interests of the country. One of the worst evils which results from the wretched system of landlord and tenant, is the encouragement it holds out to early and heedless marriages. People, not plants, are the weeds of the soil. The desire of accumulating, which is a strong check upon the considerate, never enters the bosom of an Irish peasant. All he can hope for, is to exist. As he is shut out from the laudable pursuit of raising himself in society and advancing his family, he has nothing left him to compensate for his hard fate but to pursue his animal course, without the restraints of prudence and fore-

thought, which impose their checks upon the headstrong violence of passion, in such as have some present good to lose, and some future good to obtain. Dr. Kelly stated, in his evidence, that the females marry, in general, at eighteen or twenty, and the males at twenty-one and twenty-two; also that marriages are postponed to a later period of life in improved districts than they are in the more distressed.

Those who attribute the redundant population to the adoption of the potatoe as the staple article of subsistence, and imagine that marriage would be checked by the introduction of a superior diet, and by creating new wants, forget that the people have no choice left in the matter. Every other species of produce is withdrawn by the landlord; and the moment any improvement in their condition is manifest, such as an indulgence in better food, then demands are made for arrears of rent, or it is raised upon them; and as landlords and tithe-holders in Ireland have better memories than most others of that description, and never forget the *nullum*

tempus clause, the peasantry are always depressed to the lowest scale of existence, with no chance of raising themselves in society. Give them but the opportunity of accumulating a little, and their coarse fare will be improved, and they will cease to be the improvident and reckless beings they now are. Such an act of justice done by the proprietors would do more for the country than any poor, or other law, which the ingenuity of modern legislation can devise.

If it be asked what specific remedy I have for the deep-seated disease of Ireland, I must fairly tell the reader that I have none to propose. No persons write to so little purpose, or are less to be trusted, than those who deal in political medicines. They are always suspected of looking at facts, like the medical empiric, with a view to extol their own panacea. The application of remedies is the province of practical men; and I will not weaken my observations and reflections, which are *my* province, to gratify the curiosity of the many, or to set up a mark at which every shallow politician may

shoot his bolt. If, however, the facts I have stated be correct, whether they be those I have observed for myself, or those which I have collected from the reports and the evidence published by the legislature, to which my attention has been called by my visit to Ireland, I am not stepping out of my path to draw some conclusions which appear to me to be important.

The great object to be aimed at is to bring about a better understanding between the proprietors and the tenantry; and the removing of religious disabilities may be regarded, not only as one grand step towards this desirable end, but as setting at rest a question, which stood in the way of every other discussion, affecting the prosperity of Ireland, and diverting the mind from the real and essential mischief to one which was only subordinate. Catholic emancipation is not the cure; the malady lies much deeper than religious discord, frightful as it is, and is to be sought for in the first principles which bind society together;—in the character of the proprietary, whose cupidity has

unhappily been sharpened by the peculiar circumstances in which they have been placed, and in the *cottier* system of husbandry, which encourages the subdivision of land, and a redundant population.

It admits, I think, of more than doubt whether the system which England has pursued of strengthening the hands of the gentry against the tenantry, upon every occasion, contributes to bring about a reconciliation between them. Whatever increases the power of the landlord is employed, first or last, to draw more rent from the land. Profit being almost all he aims at, every new project is favoured as it assists him to obtain this end. The laws in his favour are already more summary and stronger than they are in England; and he is yet calling for additional assistance. The ejectment of a tenant here is a tedious and difficult process, which usually takes the best portion of a year, and sometimes longer; and costs a sum of money so considerable, that landlords are very generally deterred from the proceeding. In Ireland, by the 56*th Geo. III.*

c. 88, amended by the 58*th Geo. III. c.* 39, and the 1*st Geo. IV. c.* 41, the same result is obtained in a month; and the expense, which used to be seventeen or eighteen pounds, is reduced to under two pounds. By the 59*th Geo. III. c.* 88, landlords were also empowered to distrain the growing crops. The Sub-letting Act, 7 *Geo. IV. c.* 29, took away a great power which the tenants had over the land to under-let, and enables the landlord to recover possession more easily upon breach of covenant. The 4*th Geo. IV. c.* 36, was passed to discourage the occupation in joint tenancy and the 7*th Geo. IV.*, before referred to, prevented them from devising land held under lease, where there was a clause against sub-letting, to more than one person. The Malicious Trespass Act, 9 *Geo. IV. c.* 56, also assists the landlord more than has been found necessary in England. Several acts, however, have been passed within the same period in favour of the tenant, as the Tithe Composition Act, the regulation of presentments, and the raising the amount on which a debtor may

be arrested on mesne process. In a wholesome state of society, many of the statutes which have been passed in favour of the landlord would operate beneficially; but in Ireland, with some good, they inflict more evil. The condition of the peasantry is reduced to a lower scale by every new power that is created. Every fresh law exonerates the proprietors more from the necessity of cultivating the good opinion of their dependants, and, moreover, removes the odium of any oppression from the individual, who ought to bear it, to the state.

"Before the civil bill ejectment was allowed by act of parliament," says Mr. O'Connell, "a landlord was cautious of bringing an ejectment, for even if defence was not made, it would cost him fourteen or fifteen pounds, at the cheapest, to turn out a tenant; but the civil bill ejectment has very much increased the power of the lower landlord, for by means of that he can turn out his tenant for a few shillings; and that horrible murder of the Sheas was occasioned by an ejectment brought in that way. I wish

to express this opinion strongly to the Committee, that the acts of parliament, passed since the peace, giving to Irish landlords increased facilities of ejectment and distress, have necessarily very much increased the tendency to disturbance: there have been several of them within the last ten years*."

Whatever would induce the gentry to reside on their estates, would obviously be productive of great good. The cultivation of political interest, the improvement of their people, building, planting, planning, the exercise of magisterial authority, the sports of the field, and above all, the respectable station a man fills in the eyes of the world when surrounded by a numerous and respectable tenantry to do him homage, are the motives which operate upon other landlords to make a country life preferable to that in cities. "He who says he does not feel it to be agreeable," remarks Dr. Johnson to Boswell, who was just become a *laird*, "LIES!" It is deplorable, indeed, if none of these inducements can be brought to

* First Report on the State of Ireland, p. 51.

affect the landlords of Ireland; and I am persuaded, that it is only because they are ignorant of the charms which belong to their proper station, of the agreeable sympathies which are awakened, and of the deep interests that are created, even though these may be with a rude and uneducated people, that they do not at once abandon their present system of grinding them to the dust, and draining them of their last farthing, and relying upon the law to effectuate everything, instead of their own presence.

Besides these motives, which influence all mankind, Irish landlords cannot be insensible to the obligations which devolve upon every man who owns an estate, the fulfilment of which cannot be dispensed with upon the vulgar plea that he has a right to do what he will with his own. He has duties to perform, which, if he wholly and utterly neglect, may justify an extraordinary interference of the state; and although, I apprehend, no very favourable result could be anticipated from a law that made residence a forced measure, yet it may be

brought about to a considerable degree, if he is made to feel it to be his interest, and the legislature and government kept it in view in all their arrangements. Many of these would operate indirectly, and invite the landlord to liberality of conduct.

For instance, the stamp-duties on leases, under a certain rent, might be repealed; the county and other cesses might be laid upon the landlord, and not the tenant, which has been recommended by several respectable authorities; the Sub-letting Act might be amended, to prevent it from bearing so hard upon the tenant; some encouragement might be held out to induce the owner to build and repair, instead of the occupier; the law of debtor and creditor might be relaxed, as in England; and if "clearing" is to proceed, the necessary evil of a relief-law must be introduced; and, in fact, everything should be done to mix up the interests of the two parties, and invite the landlords to act liberally to their dependents.

Besides, the real cause of the mischief being understood and admitted, the force of public opinion would do something to bring

them back to a sense of justice; and the day may arrive when it shall be as disreputable for an Irish proprietor to be an absentee all the year round, as it is for a fashionable beau to be seen lounging at his club-house in the month of September. I trust the time will never come, when the lounger will urge, as his pretext, the presence of his superiors. But as long as the gentry of Ireland entertain their present views, and regard land solely as a source of profit, and look to the law, instead of their personal and family influence, to exact their rents, so long will they rank with the lowest description of landlords, derive no more honour or influence than belongs to the fund-holder, or usurious lender of money, and consequently feel no pleasure or pride to be surrounded by their tenantry. Harrington, the author of "Oceana," seriously proposed to sell Ireland to the Jews; whereby the political economy of that wary people would have had fair play, and the world would not have been deluded by a system which adopts their practice, while it calumniates their principles.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE CATHOLICS.

The Catholic church in Ireland exhibits a very different picture from that which is seen in countries where it is triumphant. From being a *persecuting*, it has become a *persecuted* church, and that materially to the advantage of its character. Whatever dignity, grace, and strength, it possesses in Ireland, depends upon the clergy themselves, and is derived from the legitimate influence which they neglected while they had wealth and the secular arm to support them, and which they now diligently cultivate, like other poor churches. Pictures, images, saints, relics, and processions, are but sparingly employed; while the absence of them, contrary to the received theory, has not diminished the attachment of the people. Nor are their places of worship held in much reverence, for schools are sometimes

kept, and public meetings held within them, which would be regarded as desecrations in Catholic countries. I remember having seen in one of their chapel-schools a volume of "Tom Jones," and another of the "Tales of the Genii," employed for tuition. It would do credit to the good taste of the Catholics if they encouraged a little more respect for the remains of their deceased friends. Their burial-grounds are a disgrace to all religious feeling: they remind the traveller of Ezekiel's valley of dry bones.

While the Protestant churches, and meeting-houses of all descriptions, are attended, and that but thinly, by the genteel and well-dressed, with a considerable sprinkling of the constabulary force, the Catholic chapels are resorted to chiefly by the poor. The Protestants seem to think of Catholicism as Charles the Second did about Presbytery, that it "is not a religion for a gentleman." In populous places several masses are performed every Sunday morning to accommodate the convenience of the worshippers,

each of which is crowded by a dense and distinct congregation; while numbers, deterred from entering, either by their rags or their poverty, offer up their brief aspirations on their knees without, and appear as much absorbed by their devotions as the most pious within.

Preaching, which is no necessary part of the Catholic service, is here expected to be a qualification possessed by every parish priest. It is performed extempore, or more properly *memoriter*, and presents a striking contrast to the cold official reading of the established clergy. What the Catholic mode loses in dignity, it acquires in energy; and if it treat of topics not current in Protestant congregations, there are yet so many persuasives to a holy life enforced, which are common to all Christians, that the offences against good taste may be well excused; and especially as the appeal is directed to the hearts of the poor and the ignorant. The congregation I observed frequently to express their sympathy with the preacher, as the Methodists in England do, by a deep and audible breathing.

I am not disposed to accuse the Catholic clergy of inactivity, even in many countries where their church is predominant; but their position in Ireland evidently increases their zeal, and induces them to adopt additional methods to secure the adherence of the people. They are courteous and familiar in their behaviour, kind in their conduct, moral in their deportment, and active and zealous in the discharge of their professional duties; and if their change of circumstances has lost them the respect of the world, as gentlemen, they take still higher ground, and are venerated by their people as martyrs and apostles. Every Catholic clergyman I conversed with, from the highest to the lowest, was free to acknowledge the superior advantage they obtained by this new position; and I entertain no doubt that, at the present moment, the wise and the discreet among them think that their spiritual usefulness would be diminished by accepting any support from the state, and wholly destroyed by an alliance with it. How far the fallibility of any clergy could

resist the temptation, if the assistance were offered, is another question. It is the business of the laity not to give them the option*.

* "I should be adverse to the receiving of any emolument or composition whatever from the crown; and I should prefer receiving the slender support which I receive at present from the people whom I serve."—*The Right Rev. Jas. Doyle, D.D. Second Report on the State of Ireland*, p. 177.

"The general tenor of the opinions of the Catholic clergy is, that they are not anxious to be paid by Government."—*Lord Forbes, Fourth Report on the State of Ireland*, p. 265.

"However much the people may have complained, I think they would prefer, notwithstanding, to support their own clergy, to seeing them paid by the State."—*The Most Rev. Oliver Kelly, D.D. Second Report on the State of Ireland*, p. 260.

"The immediate consequence," says a Catholic priest, a correspondent of Mr. Newenham, "of a state provision for the clergy, would be, in my conception of events, the total annihilation of that confidence which the people should repose in their clergy, and without which the most sanguine efforts of these in their professional character must be ineffectual. It would, besides, most unquestionably, in many instances, be productive, in the clergy, of inactivity and negligence in the discharge of their duties. For as the priest has all the feelings, and sometimes many of the failings, of human nature about him, can it be supposed he will work with as much ardour for a maintenance, when it is secured to him from the Treasury, as he now does, when he is well aware that his livelihood depends on his own exertions? Is it not also possible, as it invariably happens, wherever there is an Established Church (be its tenets and creed of whatever complexion you please), that the prospect of independence and respectability, rather than a view to the promotion of

The present provision of the Catholic clergy is truly surprising in amount, considering the drainage that is constantly going on by the landlords, and that there is another church to be supported with a prodigal allowance. The average stipend of a priest, including his curate, is stated to be about 150*l.* per annum. A curate, if he resides with the clergyman, has 20*l.* or 30*l.* a year, with his horse kept for him: if he does not reside, he has one-third of the benefice of the parish. The number of parishes is about 2500. Dr. Doyle stated before the Committee, that in his diocese there are four parishes where the preist's income is about 400*l.* a year; there are, perhaps, fourteen parishes where the income exceeds 200*l.*, by something; in all the other parishes in the diocese, which are forty-two, he thought it might amount to from 100*l.* to 200*l.*

morality and religion, may allure to the ecclesiastical state?" —"I should prefer, by many degrees, the highly exceptionable and degraded footing on which I have, hitherto, as a Roman Catholic clergyman, existed, to the risk of the many serious evils which possibly might, and would very probably, arise from such a change."—*Newenham's View of Ireland, Appendix, No. XXIX.*

This income is derived from voluntary contributions—if that which is paid by ancient custom can be called voluntary—at *Easter* and *Christmas;* and from fees paid upon marriage, baptism, and for masses said for the dead. The periodical dues are paid by the head of every family to the priest, in consideration of his trouble in catechising, instructing, and hearing the confessions of his family. The sum is greater or smaller in proportion to the circumstances of the parishioner. In the country parishes it is generally a shilling at Easter, and the same at Christmas; some give half-a-crown, some a crown, and some few a guinea a year. When a marriage is celebrated, a pauper pays nothing, and it varies, among people of better condition, from five shillings to a guinea; but no priest is authorised to demand more than the latter sum in any case. The parochial fee for each christening is two shillings, or half-a-crown; besides which, the sponsors give something more. Some trifle is generally given for visiting the sick, usually a shilling, in the country. The fees

on burial vary considerably, as the people regard the office for the repose of the souls of the deceased with sentiments of deep piety. They may vary from two shillings for a mass performed by a single priest, to several pounds. These masses are frequently said by the priest at his leisure. During the war, while the peasantry were prosperous, there was a rivalry among them who should be most liberal.

The emoluments of the bishop arise from three sources—his parish, which is usually the best in the diocese, the licences, and the *cathedraticum*. The licence is a dispensation, granted by the bishop, on the publication of banns, for which a sum, never less than a crown, and, according to the abilities of the parties, amounting at times to half-a-guinea or a guinea, is paid; and as it very seldom happens that the parties are inclined to have the banns published, the generality are married by licence, which adds very considerably to the episcopal revenue.

The *cathedraticum* is a yearly sum, generally from two to ten guineas, given by each

parish-priest to the bishop, in proportion to the value of his parish, for the purpose of supporting the episcopal dignity. There is no law to enforce this tribute, nor any obligation of paying it; yet it is a very ancient practice, and is never omitted. Dr. Doyle, the Bishop of Leighlin and Ferns, stated his own income, derived from all these sources, to be generally between 450*l.* and 500*l.* a year; and he added, that the income of a bishop is charged with heavy incumbrances, for "I am obliged," said he, "to contribute to every charitable institution, to assist in the erection and supporting of schools, to feed a considerable number of the poor; and, in fact, if it were not for some help which I occasionally receive from friends, I could not afford to keep a house or a servant; however, there are a greater number of poor living about me than about most others, and my income is not so considerable as many other bishops in the kingdom." On being asked by the Committee of the House, "Do you think, by reason of the certainty of the payment of the clergy by the state,

the parish-priest would be satisfied to receive a reduced income?" he nobly replied, "On money matters, I am a very bad judge of other men's feelings; *I feel no interest myself about money;* but I know, that of the Catholic clergy there are some who do; I should not like to answer for them*."

Although I took many opportunities of inquiring respecting the purity of the priests' lives, I did not hear, even from their opponents, that the violation of their vow in this respect was imputable to them; but, on the contrary, they are signally exempt from the charge. They wisely avoid mixing in conversation which might lead them from this cardinal point, and maintain a discreet silence. I think I could observe that it is a point of honour with the laity not to rally them, even in the most playful moments, with allusions to anything of this nature.

I am not inclined to differ materially with

* Second Report on the State of Ireland; Dr. Doyle's Evidence, *passim*.—Mr. O'Connell, *ib*.—Newenham's View of Ireland, Appendix XXIX.

the description given of the Catholic clergy, in the "Letters of J. K. L. on the State of Ireland:"—

"The ministers are in general well stored with classical and scholastic knowledge—less refined, perhaps, than persons who are unacquainted with their vocations might desire, but not deficient, certainly, in those qualifications which the parochial clergy of a young nation (for such Ireland may be deemed) should possess. They are energetic, active, laborious, shrewd, and intelligent; they are the most moral class of persons, not only in this country, but, I think, existing on the earth: they are exact, or rather they are filled with zeal, in the discharge of their duties; their office, their connexion, their necessary habits of intercourse, mix them and identify them with the people; they are acquainted with, and take an interest in, the domestic concerns of every family; they possess the full and entire confidence of their flocks; they are always employed; there is nothing dull or quiescent about them. Such are the ministers of the Catholic religion in

Ireland—a class of men who either direct the general feelings of the people, or who run with the current in whatsoever direction it may set."

The self-denial of the clergy is, without doubt, the main clue to divine the extraordinary influence they possess over their people beyond others; and, while it furnishes a constant exemplification of what may be done by a rigid discipline of the appetites, is most politically devised to withdraw them from worldly connexions, and to merge every interest in that of the church. The authority that such a regulation, when strictly fulfilled, must impart to their advice, their impositions, and their dogmas, can only be estimated by those who look narrowly into the motives of human action. It is the strongest line of demarcation that could well be drawn between a spiritual and secular body.

In addition to the courtesy and kindness shewn to the people by the clergy, the church of Rome has these advantages—that she has antiquity, an unaltered system, and

a universality on her side, which others cannot claim. Like sectarian pastors, the priests are expected to be intimately acquainted with every member of their flock, and to make frequent visits to them at their own homes. The doctrine of their church makes them essential attendants upon the sick and dying. The most contagious diseases furnish no excuse for dispensing with the duty; and a priest who should venture to decline the office on such an emergency, whether by day or night, would be execrated by the people, and not spared by his superior. The unremitting attention of the Catholic clergy to the sufferers in 1816-17 and 1822, which were seasons of famine, was worthy of their calling, and deserves to be more generally known to their Protestant opponents. It may easily be conjectured how close the ties must be between the pastor and his flock, when he steps in to be a comforter and almoner on occasions like these.

Auricular confession is another mode of acquiring influence, which some modern sects have adopted in a modified form. A

venerable prelate mentioned to me incidentally, that, on his visitations round his diocese, he was engaged daily for seven hours in the confessional, listening to the stories of the poor and disconsolate; nor did he treat it as a sacrifice on his part, but an ordinary duty he cheerfully performed for their benefit*. Besides being their spiritual comforters, the priests are the physicians in remote districts, and the lawyers everywhere. The testamentary disposition of property is in their hands; and it is a curious fact, that the wills of the common class are usually carried into effect by their authority, without the assistance of the law of the land, and oftentimes in defiance of it. In addition to this, they are very competent advisers in matters of business; for, being themselves partly dependent on the occupation of a little land, they talk of fairs and markets, corn and cattle, as familiarly as if

* A similar fact being related to the wife of an Irish dignitary in the Establishment, she repelled the insinuation by replying, that Mr. Dean was frequently engaged as many hours in the chapter-house!

these were their chief concern. This gives a secular spirit to their conversation, and will be objected to by those who wish to keep the clerical character insulated in society. In Ireland, however, the declension of their spiritual influence does not appear to be the consequence; and there is an utter end to the old objection to the priesthood, that they are naturally the enemies of trade and manufactures.

If a subscription be necessary for any benevolent purpose, and the priest finds any of his flock backward, he makes no scruple to assign the sum which each shall contribute; nor is this so hard as may at first appear, as he is supposed to be acquainted with the ability of every individual. This imposition, acquiesced in by the people, has afforded the means of erecting and sustaining all their places of worship, many of them in a handsome style of architecture, and of supporting schools and other charitable institutions to a great extent; and, though liable to abuse, does not appear to be exercised for the personal aggrandizement of the

priests, who in their turn are liable to be mulcted also for the same purposes*.

Since the relaxation of the penal laws, the Catholics, whose chapels were hidden in lanes and corners, like the meeting-houses of the Dissenters in England in days that are past, have ventured to bring their places of worship forward to the view;—and I saw many tasteful, elegant, and substantial places in the course of erection. From a unanimity of feeling, their charitable projects, though occasionally interrupted, do not often fail. What one man begins to erect, another will

* "You stated that the only mode of enforcing the assessment that was levied for the repairs of chapels was by threatening to withhold the rites of the church, and that the rite which was threatened to be withheld was that of churching women?"—"That is the only rite they are allowed to withhold."—"Have the clergy any mode of enforcing payment against other persons?"—"None whatever, but remonstrating publicly with them before the congregation, that they have not paid their proportion the same as their neighbours have done."—"What is the effect of that remonstrance?"—"It generally has a very good effect: they generally contribute to the utmost of their power."—"Does it imply any exclusions?"—"No censure, no excommunication, no ecclesiastical punishment whatever is inflicted or apprehended."—"On the confession?"—"Never." *The Most Rev. O. Kelly, D. D. Second Report on State of Ireland*, p. 260.

carry forward; and a great many buildings are seen at present in the course of completion, waiting in confidence for some humane individual to arise to finish the work of charity. The new chapels at Dublin, Waterford, Carrick-on-Suir, Dungarven, Newry, and Carlow, may be instanced as good specimens of their architectural taste, and of the solid manner in which they build. That at Carrick is in part the remains of an old monastery, and is finely situated; and, to the credit of Protestantism, the building has been given up to the Catholics, who had continued from time immemorial to use the ground adjoining as a burial-place. I saw another ancient ecclesiastical building at Kilkenny, the Black Abbey, which had been abandoned by the Protestants, and devoted in the same manner.

I probably came in contact with the Catholic clergy at a favourable moment, just after they had obtained a great triumph, and I hope that circumstance will account for the eagerness with which they conversed on politics. Yet, I fear they are deeply

plunged in this absorbing gulph; and that with them, in common with the rest of the community, it is the predominant topic of discourse. Deeply interested in the patronage of Government, the Irish have acquired a wonderful sagacity, beyond what I have witnessed among the same classes in England, to worm out the secrets of political appointments. They know how every bishop in England, as well as Ireland, has obtained his mitre; and not a mouse can move in the Castle, but his intrigues are detected. The currency, the corn question, free trade, and all the ramifications of political economy, are familiar to them. If they have shewn an enthusiasm in questions which have involved their civil and religious rights, God forbid that their tongues should be silent! But when they become the political organs of the people, are seen prominent at public meetings, and the meetings themselves often holden in their schools and their chapels, and this since the disabilities have been removed, it is to be feared they have imbibed a spirit, inimical to the pacific

and humble character of evangelists, and not friendly to the true interests of the people.

It must, however, in justice be recollected, that they have been made politicians by persecution; and they may at least offer as good an excuse as those who assume the same character without any intimate union with their flocks. Their politics, as might be expected, are not those of their profession, but of the multitude; and it is a peculiar feature in the Catholicism of Ireland, that its opinions on general subjects are those of the innovating school.

The English public probably imagine that the priests are unfavourable to the Union now it is passed, and that they join with certain political leaders in opposing it. It would be somewhat singular if I should have alighted upon those only who took the opposite view; but, with hardly an exception, I found them unanimous in its favour. Their choice is not between representatives acquainted with the state of the country, disposed and able to assist it, and others who are ignorant and regardless of her inte-

rests; but between a gentry violent, prejudiced, without nationality, and a great part aristocratic neither by birth, fortune, or feelings; and the English parliament, which if it be less interested is less prejudiced, and which has the power to execute what it resolves. Indeed, it would argue a short-sightedness, equal to that which is affected by a modern beau, to prefer the government of the Irish proprietary to that of England. The priests know full well to whom they are indebted for the late act of justice; and the prelates are too enlightened, and some of them too secular, to join in an outcry against an arrangement so beneficial to the pecuniary interests of the people.

We heard it remarked by persons whose evidence was undeniable, that the social intercourse of the clergy with their people, both in the Catholic and Presbyterian churches, was productive of an evil greatly to be deplored. The general habit of temperance among the clergy of the higher rank, and in towns, is above all suspicion; but the inferior clergy in the remote parishes

are charged with occasionally yielding to the ensnaring temptations of good fellowship, and forgetting the sanctity of their profession.

Although the services of the Catholic church are essentially devotional, and its preaching consists mainly of persuasives to a holy life, without doctrinal discussion, yet in Ireland, in order to maintain its ground with the people, it has entered upon the arena of debate. The priests are educated for polemics, and though in the days of their humiliation the Established Church used to provoke them in vain, they do not now shrink from public disputations, and the pulpits of each church have rung with the clang of theologic warfare. Such displays, though they may amuse the inquisitive and dazzle the vulgar, are not likely to be productive of converts to the unpopular cause, and much less of Christian charity and simple piety in the respective churches. The opponents differ on first principles, which involve a question of preference, and neither of them is likely, for the sake of truth alone,

to abandon a religion confirmed by habit and education. Mankind in general require additional motives to induce them to throw off the old chains of authority, besides the conviction of the understanding.

From all I could gather, no doubt can remain of the fact that the adherents to the church of Rome are increasing among the lower classes, and lessening among the higher. New Catholic chapels are building, and enlargements taking place in various directions. I stepped over one of these, and found it ninety feet long by more than forty broad, and capable of accommodating, according to the Catholic mode of worship, a thousand people. Even in the North, the poor naturally fall away to worship with their companions in toil; and at Belfast, where the Catholics were few, they have within the present century greatly increased: yet Belfast has had the benefit of public discussion. It is stated in the "Letters on the State of Ireland, by J. K. L.," which are attributed to the pen of Dr. Doyle, that in a diocese he is acquainted with, which is un-

derstood to be his own, the conversions to the Catholic faith are, at an average, about two hundred each year; and he supposes, through the kingdom, they may amount to about five thousand annually.

The moral effects produced by the abasement of the Catholic hierarchy are very apparent among the laity. They are acted upon by more circumstances than an insulated profession; and religion is only one of the modes by which their moral feeling is improved. Still the Catholic population of Ireland owe a debt of gratitude to their pastors which time can never efface. The inviolability of the marriage vow, the chastity of their females, the affection between children and parents, the charity of the poor to the still poorer, and generally the fulfilment of the social duties, are virtues in which the Irish are conspicuously eminent; and I will not stay to calculate how much they have been the result of a peculiar economy, and how much we must abate from the power of religion. There can be no doubt that without the wholesome control of the church,

these virtues would have shrunk into a diminutive compass; while the vices, to which the people are addicted, would have swollen to a fearful magnitude; and if the priests had been deprived of their influence, as some persons would advise, would have utterly laid waste the country.

It is very true that much inconvenience is experienced from the political character of the priests; but let the most thoughtless person reflect for a moment upon the consequences which must result from any considerable diminution of their authority. At present they are tied to their people by the most powerful sanction this life offers. Their self-love obliges them to study the happiness of those by whom they are surrounded. They know and feel that acts of rebellion and insubordination to the state relax their own influence; and however much they may have encouraged the people in their late demands, where their own liberties were involved, they are not so blind as to wish to break up the organization of society, nor are they so rash as to imagine they would

improve the situation of the people by separating them from England. They are, on the contrary, the best check that exists to moderate the wild career of ignorance and passion*.

* "Have you noticed the conduct of the Roman Catholic clergy in your neighbourhood, with regard to the suppression of disturbance in that country?"—"I have."—"What has been their conduct?"—"I think it has been creditable; in many instances extremely active."—"Have you ever known any instances in which you conceive the influence of the Roman Catholic priesthood has been used to foment or excite disturbance?"—"I have never known of any."—"Have you ever heard of any such from any authority on which you could rely?"—"I have not." *R. De La Cour, Esq., Fourth Report on the State of Ireland*, p. 115.

"Have you found the Catholic priests in general disposed to contribute to whatever might promote the peace of the country; or, on the contrary, have you any reason to believe, that they have been persons who are disposed to keep up a bad feeling amongst the people?"—"I have no reason to suppose they have acted with a view to keeping up a bad feeling; such has not come within my observation, nor do I believe it to have been the case."—"Have you in general found them willing to assist you, in whatever was calculated to promote the peace of the country?"—"I have found them zealous beyond measure to do whatever I request them, and I believe with good faith."—"Do you consider them as persons who perform their duties, as ministers of religion, faithfully and zealously?"—"They are constantly employed in the duties of their religion; and, I have no doubt, are very faithful and zealous ministers."—"Should you, in your opinion, describe them as a class of persons useful to the community, in discharging their duties faithfully, with a view

And what is proposed to be substituted in their place? A clergy, no doubt superior in education, less shackled by a creed, most respectable in their deportment, and politically attached to the state by connexions and interest; but with a zeal considerably abated by their position in society, and with learning and taste of too refined a description to make their intercourse with the poor an agreeable duty: the real labourers in the vineyard would be exchanged for gentlemen. It might be wished that both characters should be united; but experience shows them to be not always compatible; and the politician, having experience of both, will find no difficulty in making his election.

Those who wish to ameliorate the condition of Ireland, will resist all direct interference with the Catholic priesthood; and

to the general peace and prosperity of the country?"—"I have always felt myself, that if the influence which the Catholic priests have over the peasantry was removed, that a very useful check would be lost; I conceive that, generally speaking, they do all that they can to keep their parishioners from outrage and irregular conduct." *Col. W. S. Currey, Third Report on the State of Ireland*, p. 299.

will rather endeavour to inform them on the true causes of the distress which exists, and infuse among them a more enlarged view of the great questions which involve the happiness of society. These causes lie much deeper than religious dissension: they involve the subsistence of the people. The want of sympathy between the higher and lower classes; the unequal administration of law; the Vestry Acts; the trading spirit of the landlords; redundant tenantry, and the consequent frightful competition for land; the intolerable rents; the modes of letting; non-residence; and middle-men,—are some of the evils which afflict Ireland. Religious malevolence has been, without doubt, a frightful exasperation, and as it lay on the surface, offered an easy solution of the difficulty; yet it was not this which made land merchandise; or created secret biddings; or raised a competition among the tenantry themselves, until they leave one another nothing but bare existence; or which generated among them a spirit of revenge, when disappointed of a tenancy, that cannot be

quenched, until the blood of the supposed aggressor be spilt. The Catholic and Protestant proprietors are equally parties to contributing to this state of things; and, indeed, it is a pretty prevalent opinion that the Catholic landlord is the worst of the two; for, as he has a better opportunity to learn the circumstances of his tenant, and is generally poorer, he is accused of exercising his power to extract his rent with greater exactness than another*. Religious discord did not make the people thoughtless, indolent, and improvident, while they consented to pay exorbitant rents. It has not made them eminent in the barbarous virtues as well as vices; hospitable, grateful, brave, and kind, on one hand; and revengeful, irascible, and bloodthirsty on the other. It has not made them clannish in their feelings in the

* "Do the people prefer holding from a Catholic landlord, to holding from a Protestant one?"—"No, they do not; I have always found that they preferred a Protestant to a Catholic landlord."—"Why do they prefer Protestants to Catholics, as their employers?"—"The reason they generally give is, that they are treated with more fairness by a Protestant master; that they meet with better usage."—*Rev. J. Burnett, Third Report on the State of Ireland*, p. 385.

nineteenth century, in every thing but the *following*, or given them only a few grains of common sense to counterbalance an excess of imagination.

The best friends of Ireland will, in future, be those who will reflect upon, and devise a remedy for these evils, without bringing religious discord into the front of the discussion; and the Catholic clergy will do well, now all religious disabilities are removed, to guard against being led astray by opinions merely popular. Their station entitles them to be leaders, and not followers; and I trust they will show to the world, that a clergy, dependant upon their flocks for subsistence, can maintain their own view of political truth, though it should be contrary to that of their supporters. Politicians by profession, with all their boast of independence, must represent the opinions of others. They are like the concave mirror, which gathers rays from all points, and reflects them more vividly in a centre. But the clergy of the Catholic church, if they take their opinions second-hand from their

people, will be guilty of an inconsistency without a parallel. They will publish to the world, that in the concerns of eternity they claim to inherit the spirit of the wise and the good of every age, and through them have all authority under heaven; but in the concerns of time they are willing to be led by ignorance, to be trepanned by orators, and to submit their souls to the narrow prison of parochial prejudices.

The Irish have been so long accustomed to look at their country through the medium of religion, that they will have some difficulty to remove the film from their eyes. But they must now take a wider view; they must start from another point; and their sagacity, I am persuaded, will discover to them causes in operation to which they were before blind. If I should contribute in the slightest degree to enlarge the field of their vision, it would afford me the purest pleasure, and amply reward me for the pains I have taken to understand their economy.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE PROTESTANTS.

A GREAT change has taken place within a few years in the opinions which the Catholic population entertain of the English people. Formerly we were regarded, and that too justly, as the great upholders of the Orange faction; but latterly, since England has changed her policy, they have begun to look upon us as their best friends. This feeling has been greatly fostered by the benevolent assistance which was afforded by England to Ireland, during the distressing seasons which occurred in the years 1816-17, and especially in 1822-23; for the despised Irish, with all their faults, are very sensible of kindness, and return it by expressions of great fervour, and glowing with strong feeling. The name of one individual, who took a prominent part in these acts of humanity, is familiar to every cabin in the remotest

corner of Clare, and he is set up as a sort of household divinity, the representative of the English nation, and when his name is mentioned, it is honoured by the tears and broken accents of a grateful peasantry. Any Englishman visiting the wildest portions of Ireland, with *John Smith* as his pass-word, may be assured of a welcome and protection, and that not a hair of his head will be injured.

At the period I was in the country, a traveller would no doubt be benefited by the great boon which had been then recently granted; and which the people seemed to appreciate, if I might be allowed to judge from the respectful terms in which the English were spoken of. It is probable, indeed, that the Catholic population were seen under favourable auspices; and I willingly infer the converse of this, as regards the Protestants, in order to extenuate the prejudices of certain persons among them, who spoke in no measured terms of recent transactions, and whose credulity respecting their neighbours seemed to possess a won-

derfully elastic power under their depression, just as steam becomes expansive and formidable, in proportion to its confinement. From neither, however, did I experience anything but kindness and hospitality, with a great desire to forward my views, and make themselves useful.

It was occasionally a little ridiculous to see what importance was attached to the visit of Englishmen, who had no other object than to witness the economy and institutions of a country, which certainly furnishes more matter for curious, as well as important, observation and reflection, than is easily to be met with elsewhere. We found ourselves clothed, in the imaginations of the people, with far higher claims than we had any pretensions to; and they seemed to have no idea that curiosity alone was a sufficient motive to account for our errand.

Englishmen who are accustomed to express themselves with entire freedom in their family circles at home, will feel themselves shackled in Protestant families in Ireland, where silence is imposed, in the presence of

servants, upon the questions relating to the two great parties. On first landing, I frequently subjected myself to the check-string of my friends, though it is plain that an Englishman may discuss those questions, which are forbidden to the natives, in the presence of Catholics, without giving them offence. The visits of each denomination of religion are confined to its own members, and I seldom met at the same table persons of opposite sentiments. It is difficult to give an idea how sensitive the Protestants were, when such a meeting happened to take place. The Catholics were frank and communicative, and evidently felt gratified to find there were persons out of their pale, who were interested for them; the Protestants were reserved and silent. I recollect being, on one occasion, most enviably situated between two young ladies; but, as it turned out, of opposite sentiments. "How does it happen," said I to my Catholic friend, on the right, "that we never can get a distinct negative or affirmative answer from your peasantry, when we put a simple

question to them?" "Sir," said she, "the Irish don't like to say *No*, to English gentlemen." "Ah," retorted my friend on the left, with true Protestant acidity, "the not saying *No*, has been the ruin of Ireland!" My Catholic friend was anxious to enjoin upon me, that, when I returned home, I should disguise nothing, and tell the truth, and she had no fear then for the character of her country. I hope I have endeavoured to obey an injunction, which was suggested by conscious innocence, and not the less in consideration of the authority from which it issued.

The improvement of the country is no where disclosed more apparently than in the civilization and courtesy of the gentry. The *buckeen* 'squire and parson are only remembered in history, and the ancient morality of the "Rackrents" is scarcely to be found. Still there are enough peculiarities in the manners and habits of an Irish 'squire, of an old family, especially if he be an Orangeman, to make a visit to his house an object of curiosity. Kind and hospitable in the extreme, every thing about him is at his

friend's service, and he will be the better pleased the more opportunity he has of obliging. Of servants, horses, cars, gigs, dogs, guns, he has always abundance of accommodation, generally three or four times as many as a person in the same condition in life would have in England. As an establishment is maintained at little expense, there are always several followers of the family about the house, the children, probably, of the tenants, whose business is trifling, and who are hoping to mend their situation, by being promoted higher. Nothing is thought of despatching a "gossoon" (garçon) twenty miles on an errand. If the master be Orange, the upper servants, at least, will be Protestants, and they are allowed meat every day. The remainder are provided for at an inferior table. His kitchen is resorted to by every passing beggar, who receives a portion of potatoes, and perhaps, of milk, in a tin kettle, which is carried for the purpose.

The politics which predominate are discovered everywhere. In the dining-room I have seen over the mantel-piece an inscription on a large tablet, "To the Glorious

Memory," &c., and, on each side, portraits of King William and Queen Mary. Under, perhaps, was the Duke of York's speech, which he sealed by an oath, in gold characters; and on each side of this, again, the portraits of Lord Eldon* and Sir Harcourt Lees. There have been places, now vacant, it is probable, for two other eminent characters, the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel; but since they have deserted their colours, they will be found banished among the Catholics in the kitchen. The table will groan under the prodigality of the entertainment, and the toasts will be Orange, and occasionally such as a stranger would willingly be excused from; yet, withal, if you are an Englishman, they will allow you to use your own discretion, and to make you happy will be their highest pleasure. All the violence of their politics is soon drowned in the generosity of their nature; and though their tenantry about them be all Catholic, and "they —— the

* The noble Earl is, at the present moment, the most popular man in Ireland among the Orange party. I saw, in the west country, the portraits of very brainless and sapless persons foisted upon the public for his manly and intelligent countenance.

Pope, and never go to church," they are sure to secure their attachment if they exact moderate rents, and treat them kindly in the ordinary transactions of life.

It has been the misfortune of the Irish Established Church, that her wealth has increased in the inverse proportion of the necessity for her labours; and when we reflect upon her for negligence and indolence in spiritual duties, it ought to be recollected that the circumstances of Ireland have never been favourable for her to put forth her strength. In England, the Protestant cause has always been identified with civil liberty; in Ireland it has been identified with oppression. In England there has been an influential proprietary to take the lead; in Ireland there has been no such class. In England the declension of religion among the Established clergy, after the Protectorate, was supplied by an active and intelligent body of Protestant Dissenting ministers, who adhered still stronger than their brethren to the leading doctrines of the Reformation, and inculcated in their preaching a love of liberty which will never be forgotten. In Ireland

the laxity of the clergy, at the same period, gave free scope to the designs of the Catholics, who had acquired, from recent circumstances, a factious activity, and who were enabled to retain the people whom they had never lost. The religious spirit that has been awakened in our own times in the Established Church, has been no matchfor the same spirit which it stirred up among its opponents. The political circumstances have been altogether in favour of the Catholics, and against the Protestants; and, in addition, the Protestant clergy have been elevated by their wealth to a sphere which renders them inaccessible to the people, while the Catholic clergy have been drawn to them by chords of sympathy, which have formed an indissoluble tie.

The Established Church has, like the Catholic, been modified by the peculiar circumstances by which it has been surrounded. From having been the laxest and most negligent spiritual body, it has become rigid, proselyting, and Calvinistic, in a far greater degree than the English

branch. The observance of the Sabbath is more strictly enforced than it is here, and the opinion of the party obliges the adherents to refrain from many little indulgences, which are thought innocent in England. The public walks of Cork, on Sunday, are not frequented by Protestants, but are filled with crowds of Catholics. I observed, in several places, that notices were posted up to forbid all travelling and merchandise on this day, under a penalty; while the Catholics, regarding the Sabbath as ended after mass, transact a great deal of business. The poor buy their provisions; harvest-men assemble to be hired; and a Catholic bishop, in my presence, directed his servants to turn his barley on a fine Sunday afternoon. It is to be suspected, therefore, when Protestants punish travellers and carriers for an infringement of their own interpretation of a rule, they indulge their piety and antipathy at the same time. As the Irish Church furnishes a religion for the rich, the places of worship, since the revival of religion, are extremely neat and clean—a practice which

no longer savours of the old leaven, as it did in Scotland, "Sixty years since," when an English lady, who could not conform to Scotch habits, requested of the minister of the Kirk to allow her to have her pew cleaned and lined, that she might not spoil her clothes; but he refused, saying it was *rank Popery*.

The service in the Irish churches is performed in the most respectable and devotional manner, but extemporary preaching is scarcely ever employed. This, I suspect, is still "rank Popery," while in England it is "rank Methodism." The churches have all been repaired, and many of them almost rebuilt, within the present century; and, in order to distinguish them from the Catholic chapels, which have a cross, they are more generally ornamented with a spire, and the cross is omitted. The Protestants, perhaps, remember how Bishop Butler was harassed for employing this symbol, and that it nearly cost him his bishopric. But there is a common cause which operated with him and them; the one was afraid of being

identified with the Dissenters, among whom he was brought up; and the others are afraid of being confounded with the Catholics.

There are besides several other little indications of the signs of the times. The tests of the orthodoxy in the Irish Church are different from those in the English. The clergy there, having to contend against Catholics, insist much more on the right of private judgment, and on the Lutheran doctrine of faith without works. On the other hand, the orthodox clergy in England, being opposed by Dissenters, insist upon a derivative authority by succession; and faith is a doctrine with which they deal tenderly, being anxious to guard their hearers from the abuses to which it is liable. In Ireland the clergy are the leading supporters of Bible Societies, and other institutions established for the conversion and instruction of the people, and unite with seceders for such objects. I witnessed several meetings, where the clergy presided, and were the prominent speakers. Like the puritans of old, they appeared fond of applying the pre-

dictions of prophecy to passing events, and employed a good deal of scriptural phraseology and illustration to express their ideas. Their addresses bore the semblance of sermons, and indeed they are regarded by the Catholics as regular preachments, and their object seemed to be mainly to uphold Protestantism. It does not seem to be considered, in Ireland, derogatory to the dignity of a clergyman, or an infringement of the discipline of the Church, that he should itinerate to support such objects. It is true, that bishops do not mix themselves up with the proceedings, but as they permit the inferior clergy to do so to a very great extent, without animadversion, the superiors may be considered as not disapproving of their conduct.

The Protestant Church was the first to establish schools, which have caused a very important change in the conduct of the Catholic clergy. The poor were soon awake to the value of education; and their pastors, finding the popular feeling to be in its favour, rather acceded to the establishment of

such institutions than originated them. In this they adopted the same view of the matter as the Established clergy in England, who were not the first to promote national education; but rather than leave it in hostile hands, have taken it up in their own defence. The two parties are no longer at issue upon the point whether instruction shall be given, but now differ as to the mode of communicating it.

It is a favourite project with a large religious party in Ireland, among whom may be numbered the evangelical portion of the Church, the orthodox Dissenters, and the majority of the Quakers, that the sovereign remedy for the evils of the country is to convert the people to Protestantism. In their view, the Reformation was the great moving cause of all the improvement which followed that event, and not one of the consequences produced by the general spirit of inquiry then abroad. The religious world, justly offended at the abuses of the ancient form of Christianity, have too willingly adopted this theory, and close their eyes to

the changes which time and circumstances are constantly working. The form and articles of a Church may continue the same, but its practice will inevitably yield to the influence of opinion; and the chambers of the mind, when once the light is admitted, will be illuminated more or less in all their recesses. Written creeds are too narrow for the liberty of thought, and casuistry will always be skilful enough to justify the conscience under its exercise. The Catholic Church, as soon as it felt the necessity, found the means, of throwing overboard the doctrines most obnoxious to Protestants; and took aboard in their stead a little more of the ballast of common sense, to trim the spiritual vessel. Thus she has abandoned to the winds and the waves the power of the Pope to depose princes, his civil authority within the realm, the unsalvable condition of heretics, the worship of saints, and pardon without repentance. In Ireland, the bishops have recommended to the Pope that some relaxation should take place in the observance of holidays, as they are found to in-

terfere seriously with the industry of the people; and there is no doubt this innovation also will be accomplished. In time, the Pope himself will be a mere form, and the ghost of the shadow of his name all that will remain. The calling them by the name of Papists is resented as an insult, and the clergy insist that his authority in Ireland always existed in an abridged form.

The length to which the party in favour of conversion carries its views is truly surprising. Are the tenantry indolent? Convert them, and they will be industrious. Are they starving? Convert them, and they will be well fed. Is their food on the lowest scale fit for human sustenance? Protestantism will enable them to eat wheaten bread. Are the tithes gathered with difficulty, and a composition refused? Convert the payers, and exactions will be turned into bounties, and a composition will be accepted as a grace. Yet, if the persons who adopt this proselyting creed would look on this side the water, where the proprietary, the clergy, and the tenantry, are of the

same church, they would not find much encouragement to pursue these visions of improvement. If those who are wishing to reclaim a whole nation could succeed in their attempt, they would still meet with an insurmountable difficulty, in limiting the spirit of inquiry they had set afloat. Nothing is less within the reach of physical power; and though Protestants may think it very desirable to stimulate the Catholics to throw off their allegiance to the Pope, they would find it impossible to limit the freedom of thought, or confine it within the bounds they might choose to prescribe. The probability, nay, almost certainty, is, that they would be unable to stem the torrent they had let loose, and that it would destroy all established institutions by a universal inundation.

I endeavoured to learn what progress had been made by the several societies for converting the Catholics; but though some of the evangelical party represented the success to have been considerable, those persons who were unconnected with them

thought that the numbers had been greatly magnified, and that the cases which had been established were chiefly confined to dependants upon proselyting landlords, or were persons of abandoned character. Indeed, instances had occurred where, on the approach of death, the converts had received the last consolations from the hands of a Catholic priest. One would imagine that Irish converts are unusually versatile, from a strange and ludicrous regulation of one of the infirmaries in Dublin, which is, that no patient shall be allowed to change his religion more than three times. It has passed into a proverb in Ireland, that for a man to be happy in this world and the next, he should live a Protestant and die a Catholic.

I willingly spare myself the unpleasant task of adverting very particularly to the overgrown emoluments and profits of the Established Church, because the world at present is ready enough to lash those who enjoy wealth and power, and we are not likely to want persons ready to take upon themselves the office of executioner; yet

I may remark, that every individual in Ireland, whether clerical or lay, who draws his revenues from the land, is exorbitantly overpaid: the poor tenant alone is denied his proper share. But I know not that society would have to quarrel with this prodigal provision, if the clergy had been content to enjoy secular ease and dignity in support of irreproachable characters, and to look at a distance upon the labours of the Catholic clergy on one side, and the sectarians on the other, without any busy interference. A wealthy order in society, kept moral by their profession, might have obtained a civil influence of great moment to the state. This was the position they were acquiring before the modern revival of religious zeal turned their views into other channels; but I confess I cannot contemplate without some apprehension the event of a clerical body of inordinate wealth fired with the zeal of proselytism, and imagining that they are called upon at once to save the souls of men, their country, and their revenues, by converting

them to their own faith. A poor Church can never for any length of time make itself formidable. Its respectability depends upon its discharging its spiritual functions agreeably to the expectations of the people; but a rich Church is less dependent upon opinion, and in addition to the inclination, might possess the means of waging a war of conversion upon their political opponents, under the plausible pretext of upholding the truth. If Churches are to be rich, let them at least be quiet and unproselyting; their activity is sure to be imputed to the spirit of party, more than to that of the gospel. No falser estimate can be made of religion than to imagine it is only to be urged forward by enthusiasm, or sustained by a constant application of fresh excitement. There is a zeal that blazes and burns out: there is another, more operative in the end, because it is unremitting in its labours, and only attempts to sustain the mean average of human feeling; and, after all, the greater part of the good that is done in the world is performed by the

slow process of forming habits, and by the general advancement of the whole mass of society.

The mode of collecting this splendid provision is still more objectionable than the provision itself. The wheat, and the barley, and the oats, not only furnish their complement; but the pig, and the goose, and the potato. It is drawn from the pettiest pelf that the poor man raises, and that, too, while he is called upon to support another church, to which he belongs. While tithes were taken in kind, they were a burden cheerfully borne; but now they are paid in money, and the law of the land steps in with its strong arm, instead of clerical influence, to support the seizure, they are the most galling tribute which is exacted, and are of themselves sufficient to destroy all spiritual usefulness.

It is, without doubt, true that the Irish clergy are lenient landlords, so far as they do not exact all their right; but it is also true, that they are extremely jealous of maintaining that right, and that, let the crop of the tenant be on a large scale or a small one, they sub-

tract something. When they gather their claims in paltry modicums of potatoes, the exercise of it becomes odious in the eyes of the world, not for the quantity, but the pettiness of the exaction. If the Parliament of Ireland had acted justly when the right of tithe to potatoes was questionable, in the middle of the last century, they would have abolished it altogether, and have done one act, at least, to merit the gratitude of posterity.

The Tithe Composition Act has been a benefit to Ireland. The clergy, probably, overstate the extent of its operation, when they say that more than two-thirds of the parishes have adopted its provisions. The Report of a Committee of the House of Commons, two years ago, stated the number at about one half of the whole.

Before I dismiss the question of the Church from my thoughts, let me be permitted to throw in some reflections which occur to me of a conciliatory character, and which may tend to assuage the acerbity of both parties. Whoever regards the

dispute between the Catholic and Protestant communions as exclusively religious, takes a narrow view of a question which has agitated the earth to its very foundations; and as the business of the politician is not with the truth or error of their respective dogmas, it becomes him to take a large view of the subject, and I am not without hope that he may find the following observations deserving of his consideration.

The dispute in question involves the two great principles by which mankind have always been governed; the one by their affections, the other by the understanding. And although neither of these principles is ever exhibited in human institutions in a simple form, yet one of them always preponderates in the several schemes of government and religion which have been promulgated to the world. The proportion is always a question of preference, and neither can be pronounced the best under all circumstances. Absolute authority is never exercised by brute force alone. It obtains its ascendancy by appeals to antiquity,

established institutions, the social affections, honour, glory, the weaknesses and infirmities of our nature, and everything which inflames the imagination. Absolute monarchies, the ancient democracies, the Catholic religion, the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the army and navy, all incline to produce their effects through this medium. The old relation between landlord and tenant, whether clannish or feudal, was of this character; and chivalry is, perhaps, an example of the greatest extreme to which it has been carried.

The principle which governs mankind by reason, is of more modern date, and has grown out of the improvement of the human race. It relies for its success upon individual conviction, and appeals to utility, self-love, interest, profit, abstract truth. Limited monarchies, modern republics, the Protestant religion, govern principally through the influence upon the understanding. Science, and all inductive philosophy, mechanics' institutions, and popular education, rely for their success upon this foundation.

The extreme of the system is exemplified in secular affairs in our statute-book, and in the technical administration of justice in our courts of law; and, in religious matters, in the opinions and practice of some of the sects.

Now, the system of authority derived through the affections, is the oldest and most universal. It has developed the character of man in its noblest aspect: it has carried the social virtues to the highest pitch of perfection, and has crushed the selfish vices: it has nourished honourable feelings, generosity to the oppressed, charity to the poor, protection to the weaker sex, and has enabled man to exercise the most extraordinary self-denial.

The Catholic religion is a striking illustration of the government of men by their affections. It appeals to their imaginations, by insisting on divine succession, by its splendid hierarchy, its architectural magnificence, shows, processions, music, pictures, images, dresses, and ornaments of the church. Its services are almost altogether

devotional, and its liturgy animating and impassioned. Its pulpit addresses and manuals are not critical or argumentative, but the preachers and writers aim at the heart, and wing their arrows with all the sympathies and excitements their imaginations can supply.

The Protestant Church had its principle developed most completely in the practice of the Puritans. They rejected ecclesiastical architecture, and were content to be sheltered from the elements: they neglected form, and refused to kneel even in prayer. Their sermons were long, and their devotional service short: the Scriptures were read but sparingly, and their singing degenerated into discordance. The compositions which had most circulation among them were doctrinal and critical, and the metaphysics of religion have always been their favourite theme. There was a time when Shakspeare would not have been found on their shelves, and Pope was only tolerated by their successors because of his didactics. Time, which changes all things, has mitigated their

sternness, and the Muses and the Graces no longer repudiate their friendship.

A people which has made but little progress in the reasonable system in their habits of thinking and acting, and continues to indulge in clannish feelings, which is only another mode of expressing their subjection to their passions, is not in a condition to receive the Protestant form of religion, and reject another well suited to their general character. If ever any great impression is made upon them, it will probably be by some new sect, unconnected with Protestant politics, which are with them identified with oppression. It appears to me hopeless to expect that a whole people should throw off the old chains of authority, by exciting them to inquiry, and that they should ever settle down in any church already established. Like the new republics of South America, they must have half a century of stormy controversy, and would subside into some new development, distinguished from any previously existing. The education which is everywhere going on will tempt them to assert

the liberty of thought; and though it should not induce them to throw off the Catholic religion, will inevitably force the clergy to modify it so as to make it conform as far as possible to the new light. No Church, that is left to itself, can hold the same ground eternally. The legitimate inquiry of some, and the restless spirit or fanciful notions of others, will for ever create new sects and parties, and the separatists will be generally those who believe a little less of the old doctrine, however eager their appetite may be for the new.

But there is yet another consideration which the politician must fairly entertain, before he can make himself a party to any scheme of national conversion. The hold he possesses at present over the minds of the Irish, is chiefly founded on an established order of things, ancient attachments, and those other prejudices of the memory which influence uneducated persons. The scheme of conversion which is going on, is one which proposes to loosen all these ties, and to place the religion, the morality, and the

loyalty, of the common people on a reasonable foundation. There are, without doubt, many individuals among them, whom it would be justice to direct in this course; but taking the aggregate of the Irish nation, the bulk of which is composed of persons without reflection, slaves to their affections and passions, and unsteady and wavering in their feelings to a proverb, I think no prudent statesman would be willing to loosen the ties that now bind them together, with the chance of planting in their rude minds a purer system of faith. If the Irish peasantry could be induced to throw off their ancient attachments, such is the proneness of human nature to tread forbidden ground, that no man can possibly say at what point their curiosity would be satisfied, or that it could be stayed within any limits consistent with the professed religion, or any existing state of things. The wildest passions would be let loose, factions would arise and inflame each other, and that which began with rejecting an error of doctrine would soon become identified with the hos-

tility of individuals, and the truth would be lost sight of in personal broils and aggressions. Ancient institutions are generally so strong that they cannot be got rid of without making a national appeal, and rousing the passions of a whole people, and there are occasions when this may be justified; but if the practical good be not very apparent, no wise man will open the sluices without knowing how he is to shut them again. Whoever, therefore, is not prepared for all the consequences, must be content to relinquish the pursuit of truth to some less popular method, and leave it to work its way by the silent, yet not less certain, mode of influencing the opinions of the few, who will carry with them, in due time, where the legitimate influence of their station is not counteracted, the confidence of the many.

CHAPTER VI.

OF POOR-LAWS.

A TRAVELLER, who should have visited Ireland during the last year, without taking into consideration the policy of introducing a compulsory provision for the poor, might be justly charged with overlooking one of the most important questions which at present affects the interests of England. The subject pressed itself upon my attention the more, because the English poor-laws have long engaged my thoughts, both theoretically and practically; and, although, in the estimation of some, it may not be thought to discover much penetration to be still mistrusting my own judgment, I should not be doing justice to the opinions of others, or treat the reader with much respect, if I were to become the advocate of a side, merely to uphold the prerogative of authorship, com-

monly indulged in, of speaking confidently and dogmatically.

With regard to the general question, I apprehend few persons will be found now to adopt the broad principle of the English poor-laws, to relieve or find work for every body, without regard to the causes which may have created their distress; for although the 43*rd Eliz.* authorised the relief only of the LAME, IMPOTENT, BLIND, AND SUCH OTHER AMONG THEM BEING POOR AND NOT ABLE TO WORK, yet, practically, all who had no means of maintaining themselves received parish relief, without taking into consideration their character or conduct.

This principle, of relieving all who are in distress, was acted upon most comprehensively, towards the end of the last century, when the country was placed on the brink of a civil war, by the revolutionary contagion introduced from a neighbouring nation. It was necessary, or, if not necessary, it was thought expedient, in order to allay the irritation arising from distress, to

remove from the poor every pretext for disturbance; and the debates in Parliament about that period, and especially Mr. Pitt's Bill, introduced in 1796, show the monstrous length to which the principle of relief was pushed. This Bill was intended to be a consolidation of the law on the subject, and contained no fewer than one hundred and thirty sections. It was proposed, when a father had more than *two* children, or a widow more than *one*,—following in this respect Mr. Locke's recommendation, that the rest should be wholly supported by the parish. Here it is, we find, recognised as a just principle, the notable practice, which has introduced more mischief and confusion than almost any thing else, that *the wages of labourers shall be made up out of the poor-rates.* Moreover, in addition, the parish officers were directed to buy cows for the industrious! Any capitalist, having work to do, might be compelled to take the poor labourer; and, to crown the whole, no one was to be excluded from parochial relief, on account of being possessed of any real

estate, or other property, not exceeding a certain value!

Such being the views entertained by the leading authorities of the country, it is not to be wondered, that the magistrates should adopt the practice of relieving all who could bring themselves within the reach of these sweeping principles, and that they should adopt tables which should regulate the amount of relief, according to the number in each family. It was a plan which reduced the grand scheme of national benevolence, and all the finer feelings and sympathies of our nature, to an arithmetical calculation. A more heartless and indiscriminate distribution can hardly be devised, unless it should be found in the use of a lottery wheel.

The abuses which took place, combined with the scarcities of 1799 and 1800, demonstrated very early the ruinous tendency of the principle. The necessity for courting the people had abated, and the promoters of the system became themselves alarmed. Doubts began to be entertained, and Mr. Malthus stepped in with his theory of popu-

lation, which the public eagerly adopted wholesale, supported, as it was, by abundant and overflowing testimony. From this time, the tide of opinion set in an opposite direction; and almost every writer, by attacking the poor-laws, found favour in the eyes of the public, and floated into a safe harbour on the current that was created; and there has been nothing too gross respecting their abuse, or too bold, which has not been charged upon their operation. As is the case with all human opinions, new fluctuations are taking place; yet I think most practical men have taken this position, from which they are not likely to be driven, namely, that the dissolute poor are not entitled to the same measure of relief as the virtuous poor; and that parish officers are bound to take into consideration the character and conduct of the person to be relieved. Both parties being agreed in this, the discussion is brought within a narrow compass; for the great distinction between the English system of relief, and all other national systems, is, that, in practice, overseers have neither

been limited in their funds nor in the description of persons to participate in their distribution. Hence, a *right* to relief has grown up, which, in the minds of the recipients, has nothing to do with merit or demerit, but which depends solely upon bringing their case within the rule of destitution. Several of the recent champions of the poor-laws have failed to make this important distinction.

Although in the reign of Henry the Eighth an act was passed for licencing the aged poor and impotent persons to beg, as well as for punishing vagabonds, the Irish legislature did not attempt to adopt the enactments of the reign of Elizabeth, which make so peculiar a feature in the policy of England. Indeed, the situation of Ireland at this period was so different from that of the sister kingdom, that the necessity of poor-laws did not arise. Her ancient institutions were not broken up, she was too much behind to be seriously affected by the depreciation of the coin; but, what is of most importance, there was no such class of persons in existence

as labourers in husbandry. As long as this state of things continued, the relief of the poor of Ireland was performed by the poor themselves, among whom the virtue of charity is always more active than among the great, because they stand in a nearer relation to the supplicants, and can enter more warmly into their tales of woe. The period, however, has arrived, when the condition of the tillers of the soil is similar to that which existed in England in the sixteenth century. The same necessity has been felt, for a long time past, of making a provision for those, who, from circumstances not to be foreseen, cannot provide for themselves; and the urgency of the appeal has increased every day, as the situation of Ireland has approached to that of England, when the great clearance of the cottier system of husbandry was made.

Statutory provision has already been made for several classes of the indigent, whose cases were the most distressing. The Irish have exercised their humanity like others; and though the English are rather apt

to plume themselves upon the benevolent provisions of their ancestors, in establishing a refuge for poverty, it must not be forgotten that the enactment of poor-laws was a measure of necessity, not of charity; of compulsion, not of choice. The mistake was, in making them a permanent institution of society, instead of limiting them to the then existing emergency.

The institutions which have been provided in Ireland, shall be enumerated in the order in which they were established:—1. Infirmaries.—2. Houses of Industry.—3. Foundling Hospitals.—4. Dispensaries.—5. Fever Hospitals.—6. Lunatic Asylums.—7. Voluntary Associations for the suppression of Mendicity.

The Irish legislature, in the year 1765, humanely provided for the establishment of hospitals or infirmaries, in the several counties of Ireland*, (and afterwards extended to counties of cities and towns†) by creating corporations, to consist of certain dignitaries

* 5 Geo. III., c. 20, amended by 36 Geo. III., c. 9.
† 47 Geo. III., st. 2, c. 50.

connected with the county, and voluntary subscribers, who were empowered to build and keep in repair accommodations for the reception of patients. The grand jury was authorised, in the first instance, to present any sum, not exceeding 100*l.* nor under 50*l.*, and subsequently, the sum was extended to 500*l.* a-year, over and above the former grant*. It was provided, however, that before the sum of 500*l.* should be granted, the grand jury should satisfy themselves, by an affidavit and account of the physician of the infirmary, of the number of patients received and relieved; and also of the state of the funds, and the outlay of them. Every shire, excepting, I believe, two or three, and several cities and towns, have adopted these institutions; and they form at present one of the permanent provisions for the poor who are suffering by accidents, or under diseases not bearing the character of fevers. By the same act, the grand jury were authorised to assess the county, in such sums as they should think fit, for the support of a ward

* 45 Geo. III., c. 111.

for the reception of lunatics. The assessment in aid of them, for the year 1828, amounted to the sum of 14,711*l.* 15*s.* 5*d.* It may be worth while to mention, that it is not usual for the medical profession to attend the infirmaries, or any other similar establishments, gratuitously, as they do in England. I visited several of these resorts of disease, which appeared to me, with one or two exceptions, to be clean, orderly, and well managed.

The next provision for the poor, in order of time, was Houses of Industry. In the year 1771, corporations, constituted like those for the establishment of infirmaries, were created in every county, with the power to hold lands of a certain amount, for the purpose of building workhouses, or houses of industry, which were to be divided into four parts—one for such poor helpless men as shall be judged worthy of admission; another part for poor helpless women; one other part for the reception of men who shall be committed as vagabonds or sturdy beggars, able or fit for labour;

and the fourth part, for such idle, strolling, disorderly women, as shall be committed, and shall be found able or fit for labour. They are required to grant to the helpless poor, who have resided for one year within their respective counties, badges or marks, and to give them a licence to beg in such barony, city, town, or parish, within their respective counties, as they shall think fit; specifying the character of the persons so licenced, and whether reduced to that state by sickness or misfortune. This act also provides, that a beggar so licensed may be permitted, by the consent of the corporation, to take one child with him; while the other children may be sent to the charter-school nurseries, or be apprenticed. The fund provided for the support of these institutions was first 200*l.* for counties of towns, and cities; and 400*l.* for shires; and subsequently, increased to a sum not more than 1000*l.* per annum in towns and cities, nor more than 1200*l.* in shires. As a further means of support, the corporations had power to appoint preachers in any churches,

without the consent of the incumbents, on behalf of the object, and to make collections*. They do not, however, seem to have answered the desired end; or, being voluntary, the counties have evaded their establishment, as very few are found to exist under the name, and none to which the term Workhouse ought to be applied.

That at Waterford is excellently managed, the shire and the county of the city being united. The annual voluntary subscriptions for the year ending February 1829, amounted to 317*l.* 2*s.* 3*d.*, and the presentments to 3,400*l.*; the produce to the institution, of the work done, was 112*l.* 6*s.* 9*d.*; the expense of supporting the establishment, in which were admitted, during the year, 443 persons, seems to have amounted to 2,661*l.* 14*s.* 10*d.*, or 6*l.* for each person; but as the inmates are constantly fluctuating, this cannot be taken as the cost of each individual's support.

* 11 and 12 Geo. III., c. 30; 23 and 24 Geo. III., c. 58; 46 Geo. III., c. 95; 58 Geo. III., c. 47.

Description of persons in the house, February, 1829:—

Paupers	204
Vagrants	13
Prostitutes	6
Lunatics	73
Idiots	41
	337

In the Limerick House of Industry, the income for the year ending February 1829, was 1,664*l.* 14*s.* 2*d.*, of which 1,102*l.* 6*s.* 2*d.* was from presentments, and 55*l.* 11*s.* 3*d.* from the voluntary subscriptions of twelve persons. No work is done.

Number of inmates in the house, 1st of March, 1829:—

Lunatics, Idiots, and Epileptics	42
Men (healthy)	20
Men (infirm and sick)	34
Men and Boys (vagrants)	8
Boys	63
Women (healthy)	67
Women (infirm and sick)	49
Women (vagrants)	14
Girls	67
	364

Rations served out in the course of the year, 258,524. The dietary in the house

is,—for *breakfast*, 8 oz. oatmeal, and 1 pint of new milk: *dinner*, 4½ lbs. potatoes, boiled, and 1 pint of sour milk. The cost of dieting a pauper was stated to be 1¼*d. per diem*. At Cork, a gentleman, competent to judge, informed me he would undertake to support 1000 persons, as the poor live in Ireland, at 1*d. per diem*, each. At Sligo, I found the dietary to be, every second day, potatoes and milk at breakfast and dinner, and the alternate days, *stir-about* for breakfast. The actual cost of this is 2*d.* a day, each person. The Charter-school boys, at the same place, are sustained for 3*d.* a day, each boy. At Clonmell, the diet in their House of Industry was,—for *breakfast*, 1 lb. oatmeal among three, and half-a-pint of new milk to each: *dinner*, 1 stone of potatoes to five infirm paupers, or four vagrants, and 1 pint of sour milk to each: *supper*, ⅓ lb. of bread, and half-a-pint of sour milk to each.

Foundlings are provided for, by appointing overseers in every parish, (except in Dublin and Cork, which have their peculiar statutes,) who are empowered to raise upon

their respective parishes any sum not exceeding *5l.* for each child*; but as the Dublin Hospital, to which they are sent, receives that sum upon their admission, a late statute† provides, that the further sum of 50*s.* may be raised for the purpose of conveying them.

Dispensaries are the next national benevolent institutions which were established, and these were engrafted upon the infirmaries, in consequence of the remoteness of some parts of each county, which could not be benefited by the original establishment. Consequently, when any such corporation shall certify to the grand jury of the county, that they have received from private subscription or donation any sum, since the preceding assizes, for the purpose of establishing in any town a dispensary for furnishing medicines and giving medical aid to the poor, it shall be lawful for such grand jury to present a sum equal to the sum so received, or, it has been determined, a less sum, at their discretion, to

* 11 and 12 Geo. III., c. 15; 13 and 14 Geo. III., c. 24.
† 6 Geo. IV., c. 102; 7 and 8 Geo. IV., c. 36.

be applied in providing medicines, or surgical aid, for the poor of such town and its neighbourhood, as a committee of the members shall deem advisable*. In the year 1818, these institutions were separated from the infirmaries, and had a permanent character given to them; and the grand juries may now make their presentment, on behalf of the subscribers, for double the amount subscribed, without the intervention of the corporation of the infirmary†.

Dispensaries are very numerous in the south of Ireland, and there is a great disposition in the poor to flock to them. I am unwilling to credit the existence of the abuses which were said, by persons on the spot, to have crept into these establishments; such as the payment of a subscription to the treasurer, which is repaid after the presentment is obtained, and the delivering out of medicines, which are taken back at a reduced price. But the gentry are never backward to criminate one another, and it is remarkable how little nationality they possess; so

* 45 Geo. III., c. 111. † 58 Geo. III., c. 47.

that Dr. Johnson's satirical remark, when contrasting them with the Scotch, was not unwarranted: "The Irish are not in a conspiracy to cheat the world by false representations of the merits of their countrymen. No, Sir; the Irish are a FAIR PEOPLE; they never speak well of each other."

In consequence of the prevalence of fever among the poor, and especially the distress which followed the failure of their potato-crop, in the year 1816, the legislature passed an act for the establishment of Fever Hospitals, in 1818, which are directed to be divided into two parts—one for the use of poor helpless men, and the other for the same description of women; and to admit, from time to time, so many sick and helpless poor patients as the funds should admit of. The grand juries are empowered to present sums, not exceeding double the amount of private subscriptions; but on an emergency a sum may be advanced by the Lord-Lieutenant, to be repaid, within a limited period, by the county requiring the aid*. In prac-

* 58 Geo. III., c. 47.

tice, the fever hospitals do not seem to be confined to the reception of fever patients, and they are now frequently united with dispensaries.

Lunatic Asylums are of recent establishment, though grand juries were empowered, by the *27th Geo. III., c.* 39, to present such sums of money as they should think fit for providing and supporting wards, in county infirmaries, for the reception and support of such insane persons and idiots as should be recommended by two or more magistrates. A subsequent statute* gives to the grand juries the power of presenting 100*l.* for the establishment of an asylum, or a ward in their house of industry, if no presentment be made under the former statute. Very full powers are given, by the *1st* and *2nd Geo. IV. c.* 33, (amended by the *6th Geo. IV., c.* 54, and the *7th Geo. IV., c.* 14,) for the erection and maintenance of such establishments; and, under the direction of the Lord-Lieutenant, the funds to be applied are not limited,

* 46 Geo. III., c. 95.

and they may be made for districts as well as counties.

Besides these legislative provisions for the relief of the poor, many of the considerable towns have established Mendicity Societies, since the influx of the country poor has been increased by the "clearing" of the landlords. These institutions, supported by voluntary subscriptions, furnish subsistence during the day, and the recipients are confined within the walls, to prevent them from begging; but at night they are turned adrift to shift for themselves, and are permitted to return in the morning, to partake of the parsimonious meal of potatoes and sour milk. As life is but barely sustained by this means, though starvation is prevented, these institutions cannot be charged with encouraging the vice they are intended to suppress. I visited many of them in the course of my journey, and could not but approve of their general management. One curious fact was connected with some of them—a species of settlement-law, requiring that the applicant should either have resided a

certain time in the town, or should have worked with some master belonging to it. In Belfast, where the applications are numerous in consequence of the linen manufacture, the residence of several years is required to entitle any one to participate in the benefits of certain institutions.

Schools are scarcely within the definition of relief; yet, in Ireland, where education is greedily sought after, and enormous grants are annually made by parliament, much of what is given to support them does indirectly contribute to diminish the necessities of the poor.

But, after all, the benevolent institutions bear a very small part of the burden of relieving the poor; and the relief which is furnished by the cotter, very far exceeds that which is afforded by any other means. In some towns there are certain privileged persons, who are suffered to beg from door to door, two or more days in the week; while others in the country are "roundsmen," never sleeping two nights in the same place, yet always sure of accommodation in

every cabin. The cotters entertain the notion, which is very general through the world, that a curse will be upon him who turns a beggar from his door.

One great objection to the introduction of poor-laws into Ireland, would be the inevitable consequence of breaking in upon the humane and charitable disposition which actuates the people at present. Perhaps there is no country where the kindness of the poor to one another acts more beneficially, while the rich exercise their benevolence by the same indiscriminate distribution of the potato at their own gates. This species of charity necessarily is culivated, and flourishes most in that state of society where the mutual dependence upon one another is most sensibly felt; and must ever be in those countries where the contingencies of life are most numerous, and where trade and commerce have not introduced the less precarious relation of master and servant. The most compassionate class will always be the poor themselves, not only because they can sympathize practically with want, but

among them the affections of the heart are the chief medium of communication of man with his fellow-man, and reason is not substituted for feeling. This is remarkably the case in Ireland, where the great source of relief for the indigent is the poor cotters. A beggar goes into their cabins without invitation, is supplied with a few potatoes and a little butter-milk, and then departs; and this is submitted to by the poorest of the farmers as long as they have any thing to spare. The rich, neither Catholic nor Protestant, (and I speak here the sentiments of Catholic bishops who are well acquainted with the subject,) do much; the poor help the poor. In Scotland, the same disposition is observed to exist; while the great contributors to the weekly and sacramental collections are the labouring and industrious part of the community, and not the heritors.

It is true, there may be no great self-denial in giving away food of so perishable a nature as the potato, since the possessors cannot hope to keep it for themselves be-

yond the return of the season when the new supplies come in; still the general usage shows a habit of such practical benefit, that I cannot look forward to the introduction of poor-laws, without entertaining the greatest apprehension of losing so estimable and useful a virtue.

In consequence of the changes which have taken place in the relation of the different classes of society, the eleemosynary bounty of the affluent in England has been diverted into fresh channels; and the charity, which was formerly awakened by their close contact with their distressed neighbours, now goes out in the form of institutions for the religious and moral improvement of the world, many of them to take effect only in remote regions, with which the donors have but little acquaintance, and where their contributions are dispensed by committees and strangers, instead of by themselves.

Then, again, there is another virtue, very conspicuous among the Irish, as among the Scotch—the affection subsisting between parents and children; and the obligation to

support each other is felt to be so imperative, that no excuse can release the parties from it. In England the parental and filial affections are nearly extinguished among the poor, and modern education has not improved the relation even among the rich. The introduction of poor-laws certainly has the demoralizing effect of blunting these natural instincts. It is repeatedly remarked by the different reporters in Sir John Sinclair's great storehouse of rural knowledge, the "Statistic Account of Scotland," that in those parishes where rates are established, it is not unusual for those who have been accustomed to pay them, to think they have a right to throw their old servants and poor relations upon the parish, as soon as they become unable to support themselves: and he must have had little experience of the poor of England, who has not witnessed numerous instances where the strongest natural instincts of the mother have been overcome by her wish to get rid of sustaining her child. However mean our opinion of the

poor Irish may be, I do not believe as many cases of the desertion of children by parents would be discovered in the whole kingdom of Ireland, as might be found in one single parish in the south of England; nor, with all their perversion of language, is there one half so gross, as that we hear every day, the making a family and "an incumbrance" convertible terms. In Ireland, every man may be called a boy; a ditch, a furze-hedge; a gate, a stone wall; a great-coat may be employed to keep out the heat, but a parent never speaks of his child as "an incumbrance!"

It should be the business of the statesman to keep the natural affections active in society as long as he can. The exercise of them is the cardinal virtue of the poor. Wealth, prosperity, trade, commerce, manufactures, with the independence and selfishness they bring in their train, will weaken and obliterate them in spite of his efforts. If nations are determined to be rich, they must either forego the advantage to be derived from many of our best instincts, or

must communicate such an education as will, by strengthening and elevating the mind, counterbalance the loss of them.

I have now put the reader in possession of the means which Ireland possesses of providing for her indigent population. Her institutions, indeed, do not admit every species of pauperism; but there is a place of refuge, on a limited scale it must be admitted, for those cases which are the least questionable in principle—the aged, impotent, lunatic, and sick poor. The workhouses, as far as they exist, instead of being what their name would import, are the retreat of unbefriended age and impotency, of which there is very little, compared with that in England. Some extension of these might easily be effected, if the principle of providing for the decayed be thought advisable to adopt. I cannot forbear to entertain, myself, the apprehension, that if easy admission were obtained into such establishments, the inevitable consequence would be to destroy among the poor themselves that lively sense of the obligation they now uni-

versally feel, to support their aged parents and helpless offspring.

The provision for those who suffer by sickness or by accidents, cannot be objected to on the same ground. Men will not, in general, voluntarily become sick, or suffer accidents, in order to avoid less serious evils; though cases are not wanting where some have preferred to be immured in a gaol, to earning their bread by the sweat of their brow. Infirmaries and fever hospitals are, therefore, unobjectionable; and, although dispensaries rather encourage the poor to rely upon the empiricism of medicine, it is a harmless prejudice, from which their betters have not delivered themselves; and, left upon their present footing, no serious abuse is likely to occur.

I will not, on the present occasion, embark largely on the controverted question of the poor-laws, because, for the last few years, the press has groaned under the works which have been published on the subject; and I am the less inclined, having, very early in the discussion, laid my views before

the public, with the intention of illustrating the nature of benevolence, for which the poor-laws are proposed as a substitute. Above all, I would wish to avoid that narrow treatment of the question which regards it as one of political economy. How the labouring poor are to improve the wealth of the country is, no doubt, of great moment; but how they, with the rich, are to be made happy, is a subject of more vital importance. The philanthropy of the rich is one of the means which is relied upon for obtaining this desirable end; and there are few stronger characteristics of the present age, so far at least as regards Great Britain and Ireland, than the universal diffusion of this spirit. Every proposal for the benefit of the poor and the ignorant is sure to meet with sympathy and support: everywhere are numerous and active societies founded for all the varied purposes of relief and instruction; and, of all possible spectacles, the most favourite and crowded are the periodical meetings of benevolent institutions. A feeling so universal and so active, and which,

for many years, has been of increasing force, must of necessity be a powerful agent; and it is become an inquiry of high importance, to ascertain whether its results be likely to be advantageous or otherwise, and whether there be not some restrictions which these excellent persons should impose upon themselves, while they indulge in their kind and amiable feelings.

It may at first seem astonishing that any doubt should exist upon this question. To feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to succour the distressed—are duties so obvious to reason, and so earnestly enforced by religion, that any one who ventures to question the benefit of the rich relieving the poor, must run the risk of being considered paradoxical and heartless. But those who consider it safe to abandon themselves without reflection to the guidance of any emotion, however excellent, mistake the nature of our condition in the world. As the most wholesome food, when taken in continued excess, may lead to disease and death, so our best feelings, if not carefully directed, may lead

to errors of a most dangerous nature. In the case of a national provision for the poor, of benevolent institutions supported by voluntary subscriptions, which have the same object, and the systematic relief furnished by some of the wealthy, the doctrine admits of various illustrations.

It may, I apprehend, be safely assumed, that a state of independent comfort, the result of their own efforts and foresight, is that in which we would wish to see the peasantry of every country; and that the quantity of wealth which shall be accumulated ought not to be the only measure of the benefit. The praise universally bestowed upon that spirit which leads the English poor to submit to so many privations rather than become the inhabitants of a poor-house, sufficiently marks the agreement of mankind on this point, without building it upon the controverted positions of Mr. Malthus. The feelings which incite the poor to this resolute struggle for independence, may be considered as one of the chief agents by which the prosperity of nations is secured, and the

means through which, in one place, a barren soil teems with thriving inhabitants, while in another, a country blessed with every advantage that Nature can bestow, is for ages little other than a desert*.

The kind intercourse of voluntary benevolence is not to be compared to the churlish severity of parish relief, yet in both cases there must be a feeling of dependence and humiliation attached to the receiving of regular and permanent succour from any source but our own active exertions. The imperfections of human nature will creep into the bosom of the almoner, along with even the best and most disinterested feelings; and it will be discovered by the poor, that obsequiousness, ostentatious gratitude, and affected humility, will frequently make their way more advantageously than unremitting industry and anxious forethought. Hence,

* The decay of the Roman empire under a long continuance of peace, and the unprecedented prosperity of Greece and Sicily under the most destructive wars, with the case of England during her civil commotions, may satisfy us, that even security of property is not, by any means, the great secret of national prosperity.

many practical evils may arise; and I think no person can be acquainted with the poor in cities, without observing that they actually do arise to a very great extent.

Eleemosynary relief must, also, in its nature be fluctuating and uncertain, and its tendency is, not only to weaken the prudential motives, but to nourish the disposition to rely upon possible good fortune; and it seems to be an inherent quality of human nature, wherever uncertain chances are the groundwork of our expectations, to rely upon having, in all cases, the benefit of the prize*. From this cause, whenever a large supply of gratuitous assistance to the poor becomes a part of the national system, it no longer acts as a relief in cases of peculiar and unforeseen emergency; but, being already anticipated, and much more than anticipated, is at best no relief, and, it may be feared, has an inevitable tendency to enervate and undermine all those energies of character which afford the only sure

* The well-known improvidence of the West India planters is attributed to the fluctuating nature of their crops.

maintenance of the labourer, and the best and soundest foundation for the prosperity of his country. So narrow is the path of benevolence (like that, however, of every other virtue), that, even in attempting to put any person forward in earning a livelihood, the supporters of favourites are too apt to forget that they are using the wealth and influence they possess in society, to reduce the prosperity of some neighbour, who has succeeded in the same line of business; thus holding out the fatal lesson, that no industry or good character can eventually be secure, without a dependent connexion with the active directors of charity in their neighbourhood.

There is, indeed, one unfortunate result to be anticipated from the distribution of voluntary charity, which is not produced by the operation of poor-laws. The family which has struggled through life without parish assistance, has, at least, the good word of overseers, who rejoice in any deduction from the herd of hungry applicants; but the philanthropist, whose pleasures are

derived through his sympathies with distress, and whose most agreeable associations are with the poverty he has relieved, will hardly sympathize with the resolute endurance of an independent spirit. Such an one is happy if he have only to bear the cold neglect of that part of the rich who, by an avoidance of all charity, keep their left hand in total ignorance of what the right hand doeth; and has not, in addition, to encounter the attempts of the beneficent to diminish the advantages of his situation in favour of some client in more abject poverty. The allotted rewards of virtue, and the allotted punishments of vice, are thus alike confounded; and will not the poor, observing that unremitted industry and resolute independence are not more sure of obtaining their just deserts than the opposite course of idleness and improvidence, or, what is equally inimical, humouring the fancies of the philanthropist, give up, in despair, the virtues of most difficult attainment, and exchange them for a mean and humiliating dependence, which will end in

mendicity? I remember the reply of an independent fellow, though somewhat lax moralist, to one of these benevolent enthusiasts, who threatened to supersede him, "You forget, Sir;—I am a carpenter;" which was unanswerable.

As the world, however, is not redundantly supplied with persons who dare assert this independence, it seems necessary, in order to avoid the gloomy catastrophe I have alluded to, that great discrimination should be employed in selecting the objects of relief. The distribution made by the agents of the law, or by committees, cannot be select, and is still more likely to be productive of evil than that which is made by rich individuals. In the one case, the almoner is tied up by rules, which preclude him from the exercise of a discretionary power, and which make the measure of distress almost the only question for his consideration; while, in the other case, the individual, who is dispensing for himself, is left at complete liberty to exercise the virtue under the guidance of his reason. The

reader will not have failed to remark, that none of these objections apply to the exercise of charity by the poor themselves, which, although under the direction of an involuntary impulse, is not chargeable with possessing a tendency to lower the recipients in the estimation of themselves.

Yet, to paralyse the noble virtue of charity by the calculations of prudential reason, or the statistics of political economy, can never be the wish of any wise or good man; and it is far better that some abuse of indiscriminate relief should exist, than that we should extinguish our best feelings by a cold and frigid philosophy. My arguments are chiefly intended to caution the world against ministering to its own deception, by the encouragement they at present give to philanthropic enthusiasts, who imagine the world will never go on well but under their direction, and to the second-hand and spurious charity of committees, boards, vestries, and other bodies of men acting in a collective or corporate capacity. They are become the favourite resort

of such as love to exercise patronage and authority; while they hold out a temptation to the rich to contribute to charitable funds, not unfrequently to spare themselves the shock of coming in contact with misery, and thus to lose all those indirect benefits which arise from a close connexion of the upper with the lower classes.

Charity, to bless him who gives and him who receives, must be impelled by sympathy of heart, directed by a sound discretion.

It is frequently urged as the plea for introducing poor-laws into Ireland, that Scotland has, in spite of the warning of England, been forced into the measure; but it is forgotten, in using this argument, that Scotland, as long as her population consisted of little farmers, like those for whom compulsory assistance is now sought in the sister country, possessed the power for a long period without employing it; and that it is only when the condition of society has been changed, and the masters and workmen have been subject to the vicissitudes of trade and ma-

nufacture, that she has been compelled to resort to an assessment. Not until Ireland shall become manufacturing, and her population shall be occupied in a species of labour that is constantly ebbing and flowing, will she be able to make out a case parallel to that of England; but the poor-laws are now proposed to relieve the poor tenantry, who are exposed to the dearth of seasons; who pay extravagant rents; and have fallen upon those evil times in agriculture, when the conversion of cotter tenants into farmers with capital takes place. This natural step in the progress of society is now to be provided for, and it will require all the sagacity and foresight of a great statesman to prevent it from heaping still more misery upon the country.

Another great impediment to the introduction of poor-laws arises out of the nature of the property to be assessed, a great part of which is in the hands of persons who are on the very brink of indigence, and who need only a slight diminution of their present resources to plunge them headlong into

it; while no inconsiderable portion of land is occupied by those who are already paupers. If the assessment should be levied upon the landlord, which is the only equitable mode, this, I fear, would present an additional temptation to him to clear his land; and, with the accustomed ingenuity of a party interested, he would not be at a loss to discover some expedient to avoid the burden of the poor thereby created, and to throw them upon the public.

But even if it were thought just and wise to establish poor-laws, the state of society is such, that a proper and efficient administration of them would be found wanting in those parts of Ireland for which this remedy is more particularly sought. The improved portions of the country, without doubt, would easily provide respectable officers; but where are they to be found in the south or the west of the kingdom? It requires a more intimate knowledge of localities than I can pretend to possess, to speak with confidence on the point; but judging, as I do, from the state of agriculture in the distressed districts, where

the whole mass of the tenantry is associated by clannish and factionary feelings, and where an aggression upon one is resented by the whole, with no upper or middle class possessing a distinct interest or higher views, I think it is not a rash inference to draw, that suitable officers cannot be found, to whose hands the administration of such a fund could be safely entrusted.

Compulsory relief would necessarily introduce a law of settlement; and although the principle on which it would be framed might be much more simple than the complicated and refined system adopted in England, it must still give rise to much litigation, and consequently to much abuse. These practical difficulties of the question are sufficient to deter any country, not forced into the measure by dire necessity, from adopting, to say the least, an expedient so doubtful in policy, and so pregnant with certain mischief.

Yet, with all the objections which may be urged successfully against a permanent provision for the poor, there are certain exi-

gences in society, such as that of "clearing," which is now taking place in Ireland, from the sudden effects of which the poor are entitled to be protected. No forethought or providence, no determined love of independence, or privations on their part, would have afforded them security against a measure, so much for the interest of the landlords, and, in the estimation of all political economists, so decidedly for the prosperity of the country; and it must be admitted, too, so necessary to put a stop to the subdivision of land, which is reducing the poor themselves to a still greater degradation and more appalling misery. The common Irish, as their scanty pittance of land decreases, are every year more at the mercy of seasons; their crops, from their poor tillage, are less certain; their subsistence upon a lower scale; and fevers, which are the prevalent disease of poverty, wait upon their distress like eagles upon their prey.

With such irresistible inducements to landlords to change their system, it would probably be impossible, and perhaps not

politic, to attempt to turn them from their purpose; and the business of the statesman is to provide for the emergency which has arisen, and which is likely to continue for a long period, by a statutory provision that shall cease with the occasion. The remedies which have been proposed, by such as are hostile to the introduction of poor-laws, are, colonization at home, and emigration abroad.

The first is only a slight palliative, depending upon the vigilance and active benevolence of the landlords, and, as soon as it shall be left to work alone, will quietly subside into the old system. Besides, the proselyting character it has assumed upon many estates is utterly ruinous to it as a national benefit. Nothing can be more preposterous than the notion which is floating among certain zealots, that the planting of Protestant tenants will introduce industrious habits among the people. There was something grand, at least, in the scheme of Cromwell, which proposed to supersede a whole nation, by transplanting into its soil

a new and improved race; but when the experiment is repeated upon the diminutive and contemptible scale at present in operation, there is nothing to redeem it from the absurd, or from the scorn of every thinking man in the three kingdoms. It was essayed by Elizabeth, by James, and all the Stuarts; by William; by the gentry, when they introduced the Palatines; and, covertly, by all the policy, which, up to a recent period, actuated the government of England. In the hands of all of them it completely and entirely failed; and the Catholic population has gone on increasing at an accelerated pace, in spite of every effort to suppress it. Happily, there are many of the nobility and gentry who entertain more liberal views of home colonization; and to such Ireland owes a debt of gratitude for the deep interest they manifest in the welfare of their tenants.

Emigration holds out a better remedy, but attended with such tremendous present cost as would deter any country, less favoured than Great Britain, from entertaining

the question: but to induce England to assist in such a plan, she must have good security that the old system will not return. The interest of the landlords might be (when the assistance is afforded), and probably would be, to sweep away their present distressed and pauper tenantry, and introduce a superior class; and then, in order to improve their rents, to suffer the subdivision of land again to go on, until a similar scene of misery shall recur. The only guarantee England can have against the repetition of the evil, is to make the land itself bear the expenses of the transplantation. In her own case, she entailed upon posterity the mischief of a permanent provision, from which, it is to be feared, she can never be relieved; and Ireland has now to make her election between the same course of proceeding, and a temporary sacrifice of an amount suited to the urgency of the occasion.

CHAPTER VII.

OF EDUCATION.

NEXT to religion, schools must be regarded as one of the most powerful levers by which the mass of society in modern times is moved forward and directed. In Ireland, even more than in England, instruction is sought after by the poor with extreme avidity, in the hope of bettering their condition in life, and also of raising themselves in the estimation of their companions in poverty. The lad who can read and write is a step higher in the world, and a thousand prospects are open to his view, from which ignorance is totally precluded. A principle so important in itself, and roused into activity by such a motive, cannot fail to produce extraordinary effects upon society, of which former ages present us with no parallel case. I therefore visited most of the great schools in the towns through which I passed, in order to

obtain an insight into the practices adopted by the Catholics and Protestants in this interesting undertaking; and the proximity of their establishments afforded a favourable opportunity of comparison.

There are at present at work in Ireland two systems of education, very different in their essential principles, yet each aiming to arrive at the same end by different roads: 1st. That of a united system of instruction in common learning, and in those Christian doctrines in which all agree; leaving the particular religious views to be taught at home, or by the ministers of the respective creeds to which the children may belong. 2dly. That of a system of separate instruction, by each denomination, both in common learning and religious doctrine.

The first system adopts a middle course, and, without losing sight of religious education, proposes to unite hostile parties by throwing on one side all disputatious matter, and introducing into their schools only those religious opinions in which they all concur. This is the plan proposed by the Kildare-

street Society, and is countenanced by the reports of the Commissioners of Irish Education Inquiry.

The success of such a measure depends so much more upon the spirit of the union of the contending parties, than upon the letter of their profession, that the failure must be attributed to a want of cordial co-operation in the leaders, which no compact or engagement can bring about, where each party contends for every inch of ground as if it was the boundary line of a territory. The committee, which consists of as respectable and excellent men as ever breathed, betray an intolerant spirit in never suffering the rule, which requires the Scriptures to be read in their schools, to be relaxed under any circumstances; because the ground of contention between the Catholics and Protestants is now no longer the doctrine of faith, or transubstantiation, or the spiritual authority of the Pope, but whether a committee of laity shall prescribe to the Catholic Church the form and the conditions of reading the Bible. The Catholics make no objec-

tion to the abstract proposition, of suffering the boys to peruse the Scriptures, for the Rhemish version is allowed to be read; but for the want of a conciliatory temper on each side, and the no doubt intolerant conduct of their respective agents in matters not referring to the schools, no reconciliation has taken place, nor is it likely in the present state of party feelings: so that the fact is, that professedly the Kildare-street Schools are schools for all, but virtually are schools only for Protestants. They are most numerous in the manufacturing district of the north, and in the country within the influence of the city of Dublin. The Catholic clergy are, however, politic enough to suffer their people to take advantage of the education furnished by their opponents, rather than debar them from it altogether; but as soon as any favourable event enables them to support a school of their own, the other disappears from the neighbourhood, or dwindles down to insignificance. In the parent school, where the influence of the managers must be great, the number of Catholic children was so incon-

siderable, that when I was there, they were scarcely enough to be enumerated. The whole number of boys on the books was about 450, but the actual attendance at my visit was from 160 to 180. There seemed a good deal of bustle and noise, and the acquirements of the children, with the exception of drawing, were inferior to what I have witnessed in the National and Lancasterian schools in England. The books they publish for the use of schools are, I believe, very generally approved; but it seems more than questionable, whether a society of this description should embark a large capital (in the last year between 6000*l.* and 7000*l.*) in a business which any bookseller would gladly undertake.

After fifteen years of trial it is not premature to pronounce upon the fruits of their labour, and I regret exceedingly to be obliged to record my opinion against that of their most respectable supporters, that the annual grant of 25,000*l.* would be better employed in relieving the distresses of the peasantry, occasioned by the "clearing" of

the landlords. Nor need the supporters of these schools entertain the least apprehension of losing the benefits of education, if the country were left to its own resources, for the spirit which is abroad will induce the poor Irish to make every sacrifice to obtain it. If it does not, it will never be done by the rich; for out of an income of 35,748*l.* received by the Kildare-street Society, for the year ending the 5th January, 1828, only 253*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.* was received by way of voluntary subscription.

In order to shew how little likelihood there is of Protestants and Catholics joining cordially in the cause of education, I will adduce the example of the schools of the "United Brethren for Education," which may be taken as the most complete development of the particular views which Irish Catholics entertain on the subject.

The persons who dedicate themselves to this system of education are secular, but are bound by religious vows to chastity, poverty, the education of the poor, and obedience to their superior. As there is no civil power

to enforce these obligations, the spiritual authority of the Church is alone employed, and no instance has yet occurred of a defection of any of the votaries. They are subject to a superior, who directs their labours, appoints them to stations, and removes or suspends them at his pleasure. They renounce all worldly considerations on entering the order, and bring into a common stock any little property they may possess. A certain number of them live together in a humble way at one common table in the several school-houses, each having his little oratory and bed-room; and the number which domicile together depends upon the number of boys in the school: the average seemed to me to be one master for every thirty or forty boys. One of them told me, by living thus together, the expense of maintenance was about 30*l.* *per annum* for each brother.

As may be expected, there are among them men of various degrees of talent and information. Their pretensions are humble, and they are taught not to esteem learning

but as it contributes to the great end of a religious life. I looked into their meagre libraries, which consisted chiefly of devotional books, but I was pleased to see the History of England to be a favourite, and once I observed a modern work on science. Those who are engaged in the busy concerns of commerce, or are whirled round in the vortex of a political life, or who drive from rout to rout until pleasure itself palls upon the senses, can have but a very inadequate idéa of the simple lives which these pious brethren lead, or of the motives which have induced them to abandon the world, and every prospect of bettering their condition in it. The diary of each Brother would present something like this unvaried history: Rise at five; until seven, private devotions; seven to eight at chapel; then breakfast. At nine they go into school, where they are engaged until three in tuition, snatching a quarter of an hour in the interval, to retire to the chapel. From three to five, relaxation and dinner engage them; from five to six they are reading to-

gether, and mutually instructing each other; from six to nine study; and from nine to ten, they are occupied in private devotion. Besides this daily routine, they are very strict, as may be supposed, in their attendance upon all the ordinances of the Church; and the days appropriated to the saints are very numerous.

The Schools under the care of the "United Brothers" exist in most of the great towns of Ireland, and are extending themselves over the country. I saw those at Waterford, Cork, Limerick, and Dublin, all of them on a great scale, consisting of 400, 500, and 600 boys. The instruction is more restricted than in other Catholic schools, and the class of boys lower in the scale of society, the parents of the superior poor evidently preferring a less meagre and abstinent course of education. I saw no geography, history, drawing, or geometry, going on; no little books of stories and tales, in which information is mingled with amusement; and but little beyond bad reading and bad writing, and the four first rules of arith-

metic. The chief occupation was evidently of a religious nature, catechetical examinations, committing prayers and devotional passages to memory, and, to a certain extent, instruction in the doctrines of the Church; with a frequent attendance in the chapel within the walls of their School-house. Great stress is laid upon a regular appearance at mass, and at confession, and the priests are very attentive to the pastoral charge of the young. By these means they obtain another hold of their affections, and an influence over their hearts, never suffering the understanding to gain the ascendancy. If those who conduct such a system be men of piety, of which I have no reason to doubt, the effects must be considerable. I found the Brethren everywhere obliging, and very candid and communicative. They appeared to me to be persons sufficiently well adapted for their stations; and if out of the stores of their learning they have but little to communicate, it must be recollected they are the instructors of a potato-fed people, whose physical

and intellectual appetites are on the lowest scale.

Everywhere throughout the country are established schools, under the direction of Protestants, chiefly connected with benevolent societies, and these are mostly of a proselyting character. All of them profess to receive, and many of them contain Catholic children, but wherever a school was under the care of the priest it was always better attended than any other. The course of education in these general schools appeared to be more extensive than in those established by the priests, embracing, besides the ordinary learning, a little geography, history, and a greater scope of reading. In the common Catholic schools, arithmetic and geometry were carried to some length*, with considerably more attention to religious exercises. The priest enforces the attendance of his catechumens upon him once or twice a week, for exami-

* The inducement to study these seems to be the practical application of them in measuring land, which is carried to such minuteness, as seems quite ridiculous to those who have been used to see farms of 500 and 1000 acres.

nation, as well as at fixed periods for confession. The system of mutual instruction is not usually adopted, and the master signs himself "Philomath;" like other learned clerks. He is supported by a voluntary assessment on the flock, and by a small weekly payment of the scholars.

There is a prevailing opinion among the Catholics in Ireland, that even if the Protestant schools were without the party hostility which now infects them, the instruction of the poor simply, without laying the foundation of moral obligation in something besides knowledge, does not deserve the name of education; and that it is not possible by such means to make the children of poverty either better in their morals, or more useful members of society. The end proposed by the instruction of Protestant schools being to sharpen the faculties, to strengthen the reason, and improve the intellectual powers, we have no security, they say, on which experience will justify us to rely, that a virtuous direction will be given to the improved powers of the mind. It is launch-

ing the frail bark of humanity on the sea of life, with all the equipment of sails and rigging, but it withholds the rudder which is to direct her course. That rudder, they insist, is the discipline of the affections and passions by the assistance of religion. These lie too deep, or are too intricate, or too subtle to be reached by the kind of instruction which is contemplated by the schools of the first kind, and if they were not, the masters themselves are too ignorant to be entrusted with their management. Reading, writing, and arithmetic, and ordinary learning, may be taught to a great extent, without once touching upon those chords which reach the heart; and since religion has been the great means in all ages of governing and directing the human passions, the ministers of the sanctuary insist on taking it under their own immediate care, and are naturally jealous when any other persons interfere in their province, and instantly take alarm for the safety of their creed: but the education of the best feelings is one of too delicate a texture to endure

the baffling of controversy, and the storm of religious disputation, and never can go on well while these prevail. It depends upon the fine and calm sympathies of our nature, of which we witness the effects as a whole, without being able to analyse very accurately the parts; and it works its way by a process too subtle and complicated for human sagacity to comprehend. Still every body acknowledges its power in the daily transactions of life; and the greatest ruffian, or most hardened violator of human laws, is not altogether deaf to its "still small voice."

The Protestant principle of education is one of a totally different charcter from that adopted by the "United Brethren," and by the Catholics in general, and they do not readily admit of being engrafted together. The Protestant system gives an ascendancy to all employments of the understanding, and proposes to improve the character by exercising the intellect. Hence, science is a favourite medium of instruction. Having ripened the intellectual faculties by this

process, the boy is, without doubt, more competent to estimate good and evil, and to weigh in the balance of his understanding the consequences resulting from each. It makes him, however, dependent upon his individual conviction, and the experience of others gives but little preponderance to the scale. It has rather a tendency to magnify self-importance, except in comparison with superior intellect; and to withdraw him from the influence of social sympathies and affections. It gives vigour to a particular class of virtues, those which conduce especially to his prosperity, and which are well suited for a commercial and enterprising life. The Catholic system, on the other hand, has a tendency to foster virtues of another kind,—generosity, social affections, fidelity, honour. It magnifies the importance of rank and station, and makes the proudest crest bow to the authority of a superior; it leads mankind, by influencing their imaginations, and makes reason a humble and subservient minister.

The persons who rely upon the education of the feelings through the medium of religion, as the great means of bettering the condition of the world, wishing to place the instruction of the poor in the hands of their own church, and not suffering themselves to be interfered with by any who entertain opposite sentiments, necessarily exclude themselves from any parliamentary assistance, which the Catholics, at least, will rather forego, than abandon principles which they consider essential. The Commissioners for Education in Ireland express a strong opinion on this subject, that "they do not feel at liberty, under any circumstances, to recommend that the State should insist upon teaching conflicting and repugnant creeds;" yet the State furnishes instances to the contrary, and grants *regium donum* money to Dissenters in England, and to Presbyterians in Ireland, while it endows professorships in the Scotch universities. Nevertheless, I am not unwilling to adopt this view of the subject, though for other reasons.

The case of Ireland is somewhat peculiar. There exists among the people a voracious appetite for instruction, arising out of the desire to better their condition; and there is no fear that the taste for it will be extinguished. By leaving it in the hands of the respective religious classes, the great objection to instruction, devoid of religion, is removed. Each party is left at liberty to inculcate its own peculiar views, without their being neutralized by too much generalization; and though the dogmas that may be mixed up with such tuition are to be deplored, the force and spirit which belong to the inculcation of particular truths compensate for much of the apparent evil. The Catholic clergy would find their way to the hearts and sensibilities of the young through one medium; the Protestants would reach the same point through another. The modes by which the two parties approach their object are so opposite, that much is hazarded by the attempt to yoke them together.

Seeing that the two systems do not easily admit of amalgamation, and that, in the present state of public feeling, it is even unadvisable to attempt such a measure, there is no alternative left but to trust that the spirit of learning which is abroad will induce each religious sect to provide for the education of its own poor; while it would leave all persons who are disposed to unite in instruction, without interfering with particular opinions, at liberty still to pursue their own plans. While pursuing these, the benevolent promoters of them should recollect, that even the amiable attempt to communicate knowledge should be directed by a sober discretion; and that there is some danger of doing injustice in the attempt to give a better education to those in abject poverty than can be acquired by the class immediately above them, who are left to rely upon their own resources. To raise the wretched is without doubt an inestimable good; but there will be little satisfaction in the result, if we sacrifice to this object

the interests of the independent poor. All are equally entitled to the consideration of the humane, who, while they indulge their best feelings, ought not to forget that it is the instruction of the whole people which is sought for, and that to accomplish any national good, the entire mass of society must be urged forward according to its various ranks and conditions.

The feelings of the philanthropists who promote education, are in themselves and for themselves invaluable, and are such as must eventually draw down a blessing upon the land which fosters them: but it is important to inculcate upon all who are disposed to join the ranks of these benevolent persons, that they must, by anxious study, qualify themselves for their chosen vocation. They must not too hastily judge themselves fit to put their hands upon the ark. They must well and carefully weigh the mass of facts which, even in the infancy of popular education, are already accumulated. These studies will humble their confidence, but will regulate their ardour; and, with the

spirit of inquiry that is now abroad, directed by enlightened benevolence, we may hope for a greater reduction of vice and misery than has hitherto been accomplished on the globe.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF ABSENTEES.

In the previous chapter on Landlord and Tenant, I have attempted to point out, at some length, the wide difference between the territorial relation as it subsisted in the Highlands under the Chiefs, and which subsists at present to some extent both in Scotland and England, and that connexion of the proprietary and tenantry which exists in Ireland. If the reader has dwelt upon the comparison I have drawn with any attention, he will have perceived how very small a part of the question of Absentees is really involved in the mere expenditure of their rents, and of how much more importance it is to look to those indirect effects which are produced upon society by the establishment of a right feeling between the two parties in other respects. It is, indeed, an error imputable to many of the

modern theories of political economists, that, building them upon the narrow basis of national wealth, they become of insignificant importance when applied practically to the actual circumstances of a country. Theories are educed from a few facts selected from a multitude, the value of which depends upon the sagacity of the speculator, while practice proceeds upon the broad and expanded basis of all facts; so that it generally happens, that the theoretic principles are inapplicable to the existing exigences of society. When, for instance, it is roundly stated, that Ireland sustains no injury from the absentee expenditure, and that the people are not prejudiced by the transmission of the rents abroad, the theory cannot easily be controverted, when viewed through the exclusive medium of the principles of political economy. Whatever rent is remitted to London, is, without doubt, represented in a great degree by the export of Irish commodities; and as far as expenditure is concerned, the chief difference seems to be in the place of consumption. In both cases

the absentee proprietor consumes Irish produce. Yet I believe there is no man who hears this proposition for the first time, who does not involuntarily revolt at it; and I think this arises not altogether from the fallacy of the theory, but that every person, not habituated to look at questions through the medium of an exclusive science like political economy, is pressed upon by so many considerations besides those which engage the attention of the economist, that these become the most important elements of the question; and the general reasoner looks to all the indirect and accessory good, which contributes by far the largest share to make up the proper relation of landlord and tenant. It is as if a statesman should be so impressed with the necessity of securing the health of the people, that he would frame every political arrangement so as to secure this object. He would find no great difficulty in bringing his mind to such an exclusive view of state policy as would throw all other considerations into the shade, and would even make the darling project of

accumulating wealth a thing of very faint importance. We witness, indeed, every day, how confined the views of those students are who are engaged in a particular science; and how, even among politicians, there are certain persons whose biases bring every question to the point of view they have been accustomed to take.

The political economists are of this class. They lay an undue stress upon principles of very limited application; and, in the question relative to the absentees from Ireland, overlook an infinite variety of views in which it may be placed, and must be placed, before the statesman can determine the course he should adopt with regard to them. As long as political economy was left floating in general propositions, and was treated as a speculative science, it served, like all other knowledge, as a finger-post to guide us in practice; but when it is reduced to something like an exact science, and we give it form, and dimensions, and definite ends, it recedes from our grasp like all similar matters, and resolves itself into its own impal-

pable elements. The business of the politician is with speculative truth, which is always receding as we approach towards it, and enlarging its circuit as we travel farther, while in its very nature it requires constant modification, and admits of addition to, or subtraction from, its accretion.

The political economists give no weight to a fact which they admit—that though the expenditure of an absentee landlord must be represented by the commodities of the country from which he derives his remittances, still it may not represent an equivalent in his own produce. A bill of 1000*l.* upon Paris may be for the manufactures of Manchester, and not a single ox or quarter of wheat may be represented in it; yet it can hardly be denied, that the country must be wronged where the landed proprietors overlook the interest of their own tenantry, and do not take care that the commodity which is exported contributes to the employment of their own people. No landlord ought to rest content that he is not prejudicing his *country* by residing abroad;

his business is to benefit those who are dependent upon him; and he is the last who is entitled to set up for a cosmopolitan, and to be regardless whether his own parish is profited, or a distant manufacturing town.

It is one of the great evils of the modern system, that the landlord is encouraged to treat land as merchandise, and to regard the relation between himself and his tenantry as little more than that between a buyer and seller. The old connexion was of a more social nature, and brought with it a most beneficial influence on all parties. The landlord sustained his rank and station, not altogether by the rent which he received, but also by that which he remitted. He commanded opinions by these means, and his political importance was raised in consequence. By residing constantly upon his estate, or only visiting the metropolis on extraordinary occasions, his own interests and his tenants' became identified. He knew their histories, became acquainted with their wants, and, excepting in the case of a few of the largest owners, received his

own rents in the family mansion. The sons and daughters of his more respectable tenants were received into his family as domestics, while the decayed and aged parents oftentimes became pensioners upon his bounty. Kind feelings thus became reciprocal, and were not absorbed in those broad principles of philanthropy which are now the favourite theme. It is in this view that the absentee landlords of Ireland inflict injury on their country.

The political economists have contributed very materially to this great and irreparable mischief; and, if it proceed, will inevitably break up, in England as well as Ireland, that estate in the realm which, if not sustained by the dignity and respect inherent to the old character of the landlord, can never hold its station by the largest income acquired by treating the soil as a mercantile commodity.

It has been said by some, that Ireland has not lost a great deal by the absence of her proprietary, seeing that their Protestant prejudices would operate more disadvan-

tageously upon their tenantry by a closer proximity; but surely, if the relation between the landlord and tenant were placed upon a sound and healthy basis as regards their territorial connexion, religious feelings are not ordinarily so predominant as to induce the proprietors to sacrifice their interests to them, nor are they usually so permanent as to continue for centuries at the highest pitch of excitement, unless fed by some other fuel than doctrinal disputes. Poland furnishes an example how little the usurpation of a country, even by a government and a proprietary of a different religion from that of the peasantry, interferes with the relation of landlord and tenant, and how easily the tillers of the soil may be transferred to new possessors without breaking up the wholesome intercourse of society.

In Ireland the relation between landlord and tenant being, as I have previously shown, unfortunately founded on a false basis, the tenantry have never, since the great confiscations, looked up to their lords as their protectors and friends, and have

had little reason to respect them for any proprietary kindnesses they have conferred. The relation between them, even at best, was nothing better than exists between residents in towns, who are rack-rented, and their landlords; but it was absolutely worse, from the nature of the tenures of land, which encouraged a redundant population, and created a competition for the soil, which is now grown so great, that the unsuccessful applicant avenges his disappointment by blood and death.

Religious differences have only been an exasperating cause to widen the breach which was already created; and as these are more obvious than the alienations created by the secret springs of action, they have become the representative of all grievances, though, in truth, they might have had little or nothing to do with first forming the relation that has subsisted between the owner and cultivator of the soil. Religious hostility did not make the Irish proprietor more grasping for rent than the English proprietor of the same period; it did not create

the *cottier* system of husbandry, though it may have prolonged it; it did not give the people clannish feelings, or continue the tenure of gavelkind; it did not encourage a redundant population, and thus create the necessity for sub-dividing the land until the area in occupation is too scanty to support a family. All these evils have sprung from widely different causes, with which religion had nothing to do, excepting, as all evils act and re-act upon each other, to produce exasperation.

It has also been alleged that the improvements in every country originate, not from the landed interest, but from merchants and manufacturers; and, therefore, that Ireland has little to expect from the presence of her proprietary. Such an allegation can only be preferred by those who take a narrow view of the interests of society, in which each class has appropriate duties to perform, and a part to act, very distinct and dissimilar to the rest; and until we have discovered some secret to keep mankind in the middle path, neither too poor nor too rich, too theo-

retical nor too practical, too popular nor too absolute, too subtle in reason nor too imaginative,—our only means of counteracting extremes will be by fostering and preserving the different ranks in life, and making the natural tendencies of each a balance against those of the remainder. The landed interest, to fill their place with advantage, should not imbibe the spirit of trade, nor should the tradesman affect the habits of the landlord. Each of them is respectable and honourable in its station, and neither of them gains any credit, but loses weight in society, by usurping the privileges of the other.

The nobility and great landed proprietors are losing ground throughout Europe, not so much from the power that has been acquired by the mercantile and trading classes, as by their neglecting their own business, and suffering themselves to be deluded by modern theories which have sprung from the wants and circumstances of their rivals; while it would not be difficult to point to instances where the weight of the mercantile

class has also been abridged by their stepping out of their proper sphere of action. Without adducing individual examples, I need not go farther than to mention the case of the greatest trading city, which has certainly not increased its political importance, since her merchants have relinquished all their ties to it except for trading purposes.

The condition of Ireland holds out to the world a fatal example of the effects which are produced by a mismanagement of territorial interests, and offers to the landlords of England, especially, a warning not to indulge in the tempting project of sacrificing everything to improved rents; for, without possessing any blind or childish admiration of rank, or giving undue importance to the pretensions of birth, or wishing to extinguish the wholesome influence of popular opinion, or undervaluing the good sense, the broad and liberal views, and the prosperity of the mercantile and trading classes, I cannot look forward to the period when the proprietary of England shall treat their land as money,

and neglect all the other advantages of their station, which money cannot purchase, without the dismay that would be felt by him, who, far from land and without nautical experience, steps from a strong and well-found ship into a frail boat, to be driven by the winds and the waves he knows not whither.

Such are the observations and reflections which occur to me after visiting Ireland. I cannot but be sensible of the imperfect manner in which my task has been performed; but the importance of the topic will, I hope, screen me from the censure of friends and the acrimony of enemies. I had no preconceived theory to sustain, and no political views to support; and though it is immaterial to me whom I please or offend by my opinions, I am not so insensible that I shall not be gratified by the approbation of the wise and the good, especially if they should not be identified with any of the prevailing parties in religion or politics. It is probable, if, by the aid of modern ingenuity, I could have revised that which has passed

the press, I should have expunged some expressions in deference to my friends; but they are not of such importance as to deface the performance, and I trust they will pass unheeded by the reader. I find, on consideration, no reason to dissent from the opinions I have expressed.

THE END.

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